

No. 68 • SCIENCE FICTION • HORROR • FANTASY • ANIMATION • SPFX • 95p

STARBLURST

WE REPORT ON ANIMATOR DON BLUTH'S
NEW CONCEPT IN ARCADE VIDEO GAMING

DRAGON'S LAIR



PLUS:

THE BOMB & THE DAY AFTER
JAMES BOND SPECIAL EFFECTS
AND A PREVIEW ON THE FORTHCOMING
FANTASY MOVIE, *DREAMSCAPE*

EXTRA! WE INTERVIEW
"BIG MEAT EATER" DIRECTOR
CHRIS WINDSOR



DREAMSCAPE



THE DAY AFTER

STARBURST™

THE 100 SCIENCE FICTION HORROR ADVENTURE ANTHOLOGY OF THE YEAR
STARBURST

DRAGON'S LAIR



Volume 5, Number 8
April 1984 Issue

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Published monthly by Marvel Comics Ltd., 23 Redon Place, London W2, England. All photographic material is copyright © BBC, NBC, ABC, CBS, ITG, Columbia, New Line, Rank, Twentieth Century Fox, UIP, United Artists, Paramount, Warner Bros, Walt Disney Productions, CIC, EMI, MGM, MCA, Universal or Lucasfilm Ltd (unless otherwise stated) and appears with their kind permission. All remaining material is copyright © 1984 Marvel Comics Ltd., a subsidiary of Cadence Industries. Starburst is a trademark and trademark of Marvel Comics, Ltd. While contributions are encouraged, the publishers cannot be held responsible for unsolicited manuscripts and photos. All letters sent to Starburst will be considered for publication. For display advertising contact Sally Benson at the editorial address. Telephone: 01-221 1232. Printed in the United Kingdom.

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The indefatigable Dr Sally Gary answers questions on George Romero, Roger Corman and script writer John Sayles. So where's your question?

REMAKING MOVIES

I was horrified to read in *Starburst* 65 that Tobe Hooper (of all people) is planning to re-make the 1953 science fiction film *Invaders from Mars*. Despite Tony Crawley's clumsy attempts at sarcasm, the original is a classic of its kind - with some wonderfully atmospheric scenes and its use of distorted perspective, plus beautifully designed sets. As John Brosnan says in his book *Future Tense: The Cinema of Science Fiction*, "*Invaders from Mars* can hardly be described as a great film, but enough originality went into its making to lift it out of the category of simple hackwork." Precisely. Couldn't have said it better myself.

I find it interesting that no-one ever seems to question the value of re-making what are almost invariably classic films, so I'll have a shot at it myself. What in God's name is the point? Why is it that directors who should know better insist on tarnishing the memories of older films simply to release new versions which may be technically superior to the originals but which are otherwise glossy, plastic and undistinguished.

The 1977 *King Kong* is the most obvious example that springs to mind. In an interview in *Starlog*, Lorenzo Jr coolly announced that "the original *King Kong* is extremely crude"; but does he honestly believe that Rick Baker charging around in a furry suit was any more sophisticated? Was his own script for the film - an up-dated hotch-potch of streetwise, smart-alec wisecracks - really superior to the 1933 screenplay? Mr Semple Jr, you may recall, was also involved in the flashy, trashy modern version of *Flash Gordon* (yes, I know the old Buster Crabbe serials are "dated" now, but that's the point - they're supposed to be).

The most recent (and most idiotic) example of Lorenzo's involvement with "re-makes" is *Never Say Never Again* - simply a re-run of *Thunderball*, which throws the whole idea of Bond chronology out of the window. I can't help wondering about the thoughts running through Bond's mind as he hobbles his aged way through this one: "You know, Domino there's something familiar about all this ..." or even "Why has Felix Leiter turned black?" Oh, I know, I know - "imaginative" casting, right ...?

Getting back to the main problem of re-makes in general, it does seem a shame that the very films which are subjected to such treatment are often among the most atmospheric and remarkable of their kind. Among these I would include *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, *The Thing*, *King Kong*, *Lost Horizon*, *Goodbye Mr Chips*, *The Wicked Lady*, *Great Expectations*, *Gaslight* and *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. To be fair, I should say that I don't object to Hammer's series of films, based on the Universal horror cycle - these weren't so much remakes, more re-

Starburst LETTERS

Send all your comments and criticisms to:
Starburst Letters, Starburst Magazine,
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Above: One of the terrifying invaders from Mars (1953). Opposite page: Lou Ferrigno as The Incredible Hulk in his shirt-ripping days.

interpretations which added their own distinctly British style to the genre and added some very original ideas too (I have a great affection, believe it or not, for stuff like *Dracula AD 1972*, which despite being basically silly managed to maintain a degree of style - good jazz soundtrack too!). But when it comes to *Dracula* I most certainly do object to stuff like the John Badham version - longwinded, pretentious (casting Laurence Olivier, for example, to appeal to an upmarket audience; though these days, you can be sure, if Laurence Olivier is in a film, it's generally pretty dour stuff - eg, *The Betsy*, *Marathon Man*).

I just wish, in my heart of hearts, that directors would stop relying on the efforts of past filmmakers and come up with some ideas of their own. Where would we be if modern novelists made their living by "re-making" the works of Emily Brontë, Charles Dickens, George Orwell and Jules Verne? What if someone tried to "re-make" great works of art ("Sorry, Salvador, those melting watches are really old hat now - let's make 'em digital!")?

Anyway, that's a load off my chest. In the end, I suppose it's up to us - so let's learn to enjoy the masterpieces of the past in their original state and stop encouraging the spread of tatty, updated rip-offs.

Graham P. Williams,
Mayhill,
Swansea.

DEJA VU

Having read Tony Crawley's article (*Starburst* 65) about feeling "ripped off", with reference to Ulli Lommel's *Boogey Man II* and its over-use of film footage taken from the first film, I was prompted to write this disenchantment over a video titled *Scream Time*.

On first appearance it would seem to be just another in the ever-expanding horror/science fiction releases. However, about half-way through this film I began to have an attack of *deja vu*, feeling that I had seen it, or part of it, before.

Now, unlike most other *deja-vu* experiences, which no-doubt can be explained due to a film's alternative title, *Scream Time* is slightly different. Here, some entrepreneur of a person seems to have had a terrific notion of filming a 10 minute sequence in the USA and adding it to three separately made, British cinema shorts. Thus creating a full length feature with the minimum of out-lay, and leaving your average video viewer none-the-wiser.

Enterprising of a cunning kind, or down-right rip-off? The idea behind this venture no doubt is to follow in the *Creepshow* and *Twilight Zone* format, with stories within a story for the basis of the film.

Scream Time, unfortunately, is not in the same league, and it comes as no surprise when you consider the way that it was contrived. The all important

storyline, with additional linkage scenes, has the look of being filmed within a budget of 1000 dollars.

The thing which irritates me the most is that there doesn't appear to be any indication with the opening or closing credits, nor on the video cassette casing to suggest that this was a film comprising of three British shorts. I can recall seeing the second story supporting *The Exterminator* under the original title of *Dream House*.

A.G. Davis,
Rumney,
S. Glam.

POST APOCALYPSE

What is the film industry coming to? There are still no plans for a sequel to *The Day After*. How about *The Day After the Day After*, *The Day After Part 2* or even *The Day After 3D* (Watch the bomb explode in your cinema!) But seriously, if all that the Americans think a nuclear war will cause is severe hair loss and dying cattle they're in for a bit of a surprise.

John Rutter,
Bunbury,
Cheshire.

How about Son of the Day After? For John Brosnan's explosive coverage of all Bomb films turn to page 18.

THE AMITY HORROR

I am writing this letter after enduring 90 odd minutes of my life watching the boringly bad *Jaws 3D*. I suppose I should have realised what I was letting myself in for when I saw that the majority of the queue outside the cinema seemed to be under the age of 12. I have never seen such an embarrassingly awful film as this; a complete insult to my intelligence (what's left of it). The 3D effects were used sparingly, and when they were used they did not enhance the more frightening aspects of the process that came across in the last 3D film I saw (*Friday the 13th Part 3*).

I supposed there is not really a lot more they could do with a shark that hadn't already been explored in the previous outings. The dialogue was a bit ridiculous in parts; and as for the

ending, it was too rushed and should have been paced out a bit better. (Simon McCorkindale's chomping up was a bit of an anticlimax).

It's not because I'm a Scotsman, but I feel that an admission price of £2.80 to watch this class of film is a liberty. I can only hope that the rest of 1984's offerings are of a much higher standard.

Keith R. Gooch,
Edinburgh,
Scotland.

Alan McKenzie replies: "Scotsman? Can't imagine what you mean! Meanwhile, the *Starburst* staff are looking forward to *Jaws 4D* - a tale of a time travelling shark who only eats Gallifreyans. Unfortunately the releasing company is having trouble with the movie's highly mobile opening date!"

BEST BOND

The new James Bond film, *Never Say Never Again*, has to be one of the best. I was saddened to see Max Von Sydow in a small role. Klaus Maria Brandauer was brilliant as Largo and Kim Basinger was a knockout. In fact this film tops all the James Bonds. It beats Roger Moore's *Octopussy*. I only hope that Sean Connery will sign to do another Bond film.

P.R. Hughes,
Leeds,
Yorkshire.

DISNEY DELIGHTS

Wow! Brilliant! Simply light years ahead. I've been a *Starburst* reader now since it first began many years ago, but I have never felt compelled to write before. However, your special Walt Disney issue was truly unique in concept and execution. It surprises me why a detailed history of such a superb collection of animated films has never warranted its own issue before - trust *Starburst* to do it. My congratulations to everyone involved. I hope we get more soon... and lots of it too. Disney was a total genius, no denying that.

David Harker,
Acklam,
Cleveland.

REQUEST

How about some reviews of new films such as *Chud*, *Deadly Eyes* and *Mammoth*?

Derek Scouler,
Hendon,
Tyne & Wear.

Starburst will be covering such films nearer to their release in Britain.

TV SF

It was with some interest that I read Graham Williams' letter in *Starburst* 64.

I too live in S4C (the Welsh fourth channel) country, and I'm rather amazed at the way that Mr Williams seems to think that we get a raw deal as compared to the rest of the country who receive the network channel.

at 5.30 it's a rerun of the first season of *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century*, and on Wednesday's we get *The Munsters* at 5.30.

We've already had Wales' first showing of the *Battlestar Galactica* series, along with entire reruns of *The Gemini Mn* and *Planet of the Apes*. These were shown on alternate days as part of a special "Action Hour" season with a few episodes of *The Six Million Dollar Man* thrown in for good measure.

Can the viewers of channel four say that?

To take another of Mr Williams' points, yes, we do have to put up with re-scheduling, but it's not that bad. We get *The Prisoner* at 9.00 on a Tuesday instead of 10.00 on a Monday. So what? I'm just grateful that it's on.

As to Alfred Hitchcock Presents and



Now to be totally fair, S4C is far from perfect in many respects (the entire Welsh language output for instance, including the dubbed version of the *Plastic Man* cartoons. Those have to be seen to be believed). But from fantasy (live action fantasy that is) point of view, we're served much better than our English counterparts.

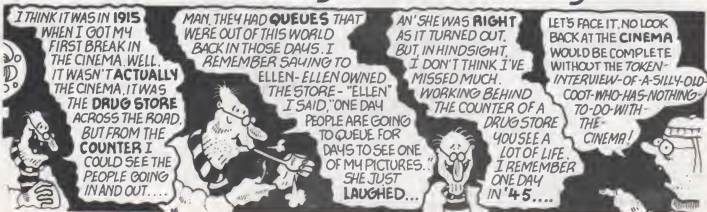
For instance, a glance at this week's S4C supplement (which we get as a separate magazine enclosed in the TV Times) reveals that on Saturday at 6.05 we get *The Incredible Hulk*, on Monday at 6.00 we get *The Avengers*, Tuesday

Boris Karloff's re-titled *Thriller* I really don't know whether the titles of these two have been interfered with or not, because only being 23 now, I don't remember seeing them the first time round, but all the other series I've mentioned have been screened with full titles and credits.

At least Mr Williams and myself agree on one point, Leslie Halliwell is an absolute oaf if his TV Times column is anything to go by.

Robin Pierce,
Pwllheli,
Gwynedd.

Son of FLICKERS by Tim Quinn & Dicky Howett



So Long, Slim

The only guy to make us laugh about H-bombs falling from the sky has died. Dear old Slim Pickens, 64, one-time rodeo circuit bronc-rider and clown, "185 lbs of walking scar tissue," made 60 films or more. He's best remembered as Major T.J. (King) Kong riding a 25 megaton H-bomb out of a B52 bomb-bay at the end of Kubrick's *Dr Strangelove* (1964). He still wore a stetson then and gave a Texan yip and a holler as he went down over Russia.

Peter Sellers should have played the role; his fourth in the movie. He didn't for varied reasons. He feigned difficulty with the Texan accent. He didn't want to do an Alec Guinness (again) and take too many roles in a single movie. In the end, an ankle injury – it not exactly self-inflicted, then probably encouraged by Sellers – meant he had difficult squeezing into the B52 mock-up at Shepperton studios, and riding an H-bomb bareback. So, Stan-the-man sent for Slim.

He was really Louis Bert Lindley, Jr., born on a California ranch (not Texas as most biogs say). He changed his name – "it was a natural considerin' in those days you didn't make a dime doin' rodeos." Just slim pickings... He made Westerns in the main, some of the best; he also had a run-in with Irwin Allen fantasy, *The Swarm*, beyond the *Poseidon Adventure*, played an angel on tv and a *Howling* werewolf for Joe Dante, plus a *Strangelove* type in Spielberg's 1941. For Kubrick, he went down with the bomb. For Spielberg, he went down, like everyone else, with the movie.

Slim died from pneumonia in Modesto, about a year after surgery for a brain tumour. He was a great, good ole boy.

From Melissa: etc!

Melissa Mathison, who always insisted that her *E.T.* script was not science fiction, is now writing an sf film. And not (as far as I know) for hubby Harrison Ford. Not for Steven Spielberg, although she has completed the *E.T.* II scenario for him. And not for her other chums, Lord Lucas or Francis (can you spare a dime?) Coppola. But, yes, for *E.T.*'s earth babe, Universal.

The movie is *Winter's Tale* – nothing to do with the Bard of Avon. It stems from a story by Mark Helprin, not Shakespeare. (Mark just knows a good title when he sees one). Shooting is due to begin in London – where else? – by December. Which could explain why Ford hasn't been named for the film in any way. He's really had enough, has Harrison, of spending all his working life over here. He's made so many movies in, or headquartered in London – all three *Star Wars*, both *Indiana Jones* romps and a couple of other less successful movies he'd really rather forget about – that he's something of an honorary British citizen.

Tony Crawley's THINGS TO COME



The late Slim Pickens, on-set for his H-bomb ride, in *Dr Strangelove*.

(Wouldn't the Inland Revenue love it if he was...!)

Man behind Melissa's new movie is producer Gene Kirkwood, one of the busiest independent filmmakers in Hollywood just now. He has about 15 films in various stages of preparation – including a couple with that great guy from *Diner*, Larry Kasdan's *Body Heat* and Coppola's *Rumble Fish*, Mickey Rourke. Gene's so busy, in fact, he recently had two of his latest films opening on the same day in America – Michael Mann's British-made creepie, *The Keep*, and the film of the hit novel, *Gorky Park*, shot in Europe by British director Michael Apted.

So, Gene Kirkwood is all for working in Britain – or with the British, at least. He has *The Long Good Friday*'s maker, John Mackenzie, readying a movie called *Carillo's Way* and our top tv playwright, Dennis Potter, who (sadly) made such a dog's breakfast of scripting *Gorky Park*, is now working on something much more up his street, a

bio-pic of the extraordinary therapist Wilhelm Reich, to be called *Fury on Earth*.

Winter's Tale is the producer's first entry into the mega-movie area. The budget will be around \$25 million and the effects, I hear, will be surreal. (Sounds like a job for Giger). But what's it all about? Using Hollywood's new version of the fifth amendment, neither Kirkwood or Melissa are giving much away – they don't want it coming out first as a tele-movie, right?

However, the producer has mentioned that it's something of a Dickensian fantasy. "The hero," he adds, "is a 20th century Pip" ... the hero, I feel I shouldn't have to add, of *Great Expectations*.

Oh yeah, and just like it's spiders not snakes this time around in Harrison's *Temple of Doom* Indy-yarn, instead of flying bikes in Melissa's new work, it'll be... flying horses.

In that case, I want the re-make rights and I'll do it as a musical. *Pegasus Of My Heart*...

2010 Crew

That well-known French connector, blue thunderer and, but of course, Amity Island sheriff with the reverse-dolly-zoom vision, has joined the space game. Roy Scheider is topline the 2001 sequel, *2010*. He'll be re-treading William Sylvester's 1968 role of Dr Heywood Floyd, leading the Americo-Russian mission (after China's tail) to the Jovian system, re-discovering 2001's Discovery and coming to grips with various of the things up yonder which Keir Dullea's Dave Bowman has, presumably, been exploring in the intermission...

Scheider, though, will be paid much more for his star trip that Dullea ever was. Roy's salary, I'm told is \$2 million.

Also cast by director Peter Hyams: the star of *Twilight Zone*, John Lithgow, and one of Spielberg's *Close Encounters* crew, Bob Balaban. As mentioned here last month (so where were you?), bearded Bob lately turned director for the first of George Romero's *Tales From The Darkside* tv series. And John, who's had a helluva '83, including becoming a proud Papa, has been back to Rod Serling country, co-starring with another Spielbergite, Richard Dreyfuss, for a month in a stage version of the late playwright's boxing drama, *Requiem For A Heavyweight* – the British tv version of which, in 1957, first made a local star of a fella named Connery.

Peter Hyams started his Arthur C. Clarke space shot on February 6 at the MGM studios, where pre-production work has been burning gallons of midnight oil since last May. I may have suggested that Doug Trumbull's Entertainment Effects Group had lost the SPFX job to Lord Lucas' ILM elves, because Richard Edlund is in charge of the job. I was half-right, half-wrong. Edlund is in charge, sure, but he's quit ILM for Trumbull's EEG, OK? (Dick's also been working on *Ghost Busters* with another Zone star Dan Aykroyd).

Costing around \$25 million (all, 2010 is Metro's biggie (and doesn't it need one?) for 1984. Only just... It's due to premiere in America, at least, by Christmas.

The Next Bond

So far the news has been pretty good. Here comes the damper... Cubby Broccoli is talking to Roger Moore about doing the next Bond, *From A View To A Kill*. Oh no... say it ain't so, mother!

Naturally, if Old Moore continues trying to sell his soul (not to mention pride!) too highly, there's always Simon MacCorkindale. He's suddenly more free than he figured he'd be around now. His US fantasy-tv series, *Manimal* – I warned you it was minimal – has been cancelled. Not before time. Only problem – Simon's even more wooden than Moore! He is young; and

free, though. Unlike another apparent contender for the 007 throne, *Remington Steele's* Pierce Brosnan.

So, it looks like Roger again. Moore or less. Come to think of it, Moore is less.

Enter: Dr Strange

One man studio Larry Cohen doesn't let a little thing like being bounced from his own movie of *I, The Jury* wreck his career. Or his life. Within a week or so of being replaced on the Mickey Spillane-Mike Hammer number, Larry was back on New York streets directing his *Q the Winged Serpent* fantasy thriller. And, as Cohen will tell you with a wall-to-wall smile, *Jury*, which cost \$11 million, flopped, while his \$3 million, *Q* tripled the eventual business of the Spillane number. Moral: Stick with fantasy.

And that's just what he's doing. He's working on the script of the first *Dr Strange* movie, in conjunction with Marvel Comics — and he's handed Universal his first draft of the *Airport 2000* scenario, which has your average airline full of fading names, singing nuns, dying children and guest-star comics being swallowed live by a UFO.

Meantime, Larry has managed something that, on the face of it, seems impossible. He's shot *Blind Alley* during 36 days and nights in New York City... without anyone, but his cast and crew, knowing about it. Some trick! The reason is the old one, all together now... he didn't want his script turning up next week as a tele-movie. His cast is headed by Ann Carlisle (from *Liquid Sky*) and Brad (Smithereens) Rijn, plus two-year-old Matthew Stockley. Yes, two... And the kid is the nub of this fantasy yarn. *It's Alive III?*

Also on the Cohen schedule is a new suspense yarn, minus any title for now. Subject: "A washed-up movie director who's trying to make a comeback. Or not. It can't be autobiographical, can it?"

Carpenter & King

Although *Time* magazine's critic, Richard Corliss, calls it John Carpenter's best film since *Halloween*, the inevitable conjunction of Steve King and J.C., *Christine*, got off to a ropey start in America. Hardly King-Carpenter's fault. Columbia stupidly opened the movie the same week as Clint Eastwood came back as Dirty Harry and *Sudden Impact* smashed through the roof.

Of course, *Christine* is merely King's Cuf a little from the point of view of the car, but Carpenter makes it work in dynamite style, with a cast of young unknowns (plus Harry Dean Stanton, Christine Belford and Spielberg — David Spielberg, that is), lots of '50s rock and excellent photography. According to Corliss, who knows about these things, Carpenter also managed something that defeated Hitchcock in having Christine (a car, you know) kill a

mechanic while on the Chrysler factory line. Tain't the last death, either.

King vs King

Looks like Carpenter has a hit again. And doesn't he need one? His *Christine* will be flying the Hollywood flag at the upcoming Avoriaz fantasy fast in France — where David Cronenberg is his main rival, flying Canada's flag with his Steve King movie, *The Dead Zone*. An intriguing battle... for, among other prizes, the new Hitchcock Award. Hitch's daughter, Patricia, will present this trophy to the film with the best suspense. She'll also be on hand to unveil those "missing" Hitch classics for Europe.

Directors John Frankenheimer and Terence Young are on the jury beating the pros and cons of the King vs King battle, and other competitors like *Krull*, Alan Jones' flavour of the month, the last few months, *Strange Invaders*, and George Pan Cosmatos' rat-number, *Of Unknown Origin* — that has a Greek director, a Canadian film, so who knows which flag it's entered under.

Author Carpenter

"I was always a science fiction fan," John Carpenter once told me. "I used to read Marvel comics all the time. I even wrote some sf stories as a kid." Well, he didn't only say it to me, of course. And T.E.D. Klein, editor of the American magazine, *Twilight Zone*, read it or heard about it someplace and started digging. The result is that Klein's February edition featured one of the sf tales written by Carpenter when a Bowling Green university student in Kentucky in 1969. Same issue also has a piece by Steve King about Carpenter's making of *Christine*.

Carpenter's Western

As I said last month, Carpenter's old Western dream, *El Diablo*, has shown up — yet again — on the new year of schedules from Thorn-EMI in London. This does not mean that John will direct the cowpoke number, though. I understand that if he's not free to make the movie this year, Thorn-EMI will go ahead with it without him in the saddle. The film company owns John's script, you see, and figures it has been waiting long enough... I'd hate to see Carpenter so busy that he'd have to let it go.

U.K. A-Day

Auntie Beeb's answer to *The Day After* is *Threads* being shot in Sheffield after a nuclear attack. *Day* racked up more U.S. viewers for a movie ever — yeah, it topped *Gone With The Wind*. If they dared show the Beeb's original in these anti-nuke films, Peter Watkins' *The War Game* (1965), the result would have been the highest suicide figures ever. Watkins told the truth. *Day After* hinted at it.

Mad Max III

... is still on. The action is due to begin, down-under, in May. That's the world from Warner Brothers' honcho, Myron Karlin, after calling into Sydney following his recent Paris trip. He admits there's no *III* script as yet, just a bunch of pages, full of notes about the possible action and development of Mr Maximilian Rockatansky. Mel Gibson is still keeping May free for the movie, although as Karlin reports, "Everybody wants him. Film people in Los Angeles say he's the world's No 1 young romantic lead."

Romantic ...?



Sequels Inc

Despite all those *II* and *IIIs*, and the odd *IV* that rate a mention in this column, *Variety* reporter Lawrence Cohn has proved that Hollywood is not so deep in the mire of sequels, re-makes and the like as we may think. Oh, they tend to make more money than the rest but really the numbers are quite low. Cohn's calculations have nine sequels or continuing series films made in 1981, eleven in '82 and the highest so far, sixteen last year. Yes, but that's 16 against 68 original scripts. The '84

projection has dropped to a round dozen (against 7 originals) for now, including of course the latest Indy Jones, *Star Trek* and Conan films, *Exterminator II*, *Ninja III*, *Hercules II*, *Creepshow II*, *Annie II*, *Rocky IV*, *The Deep II* (they might as well do *Black Hole* or *Tron II*, for all the good that'll do). And — oh no! — *Death Wish III*. And then there's always...

Indy III

You'll probably be as delighted as George Lucas to hear that Harrison Ford has agreed to make a third Indiana Jones adventure. Indeed, the word is that Spielberg enjoys making 'em so much, he wants to direct it, too. Just how — or when — within St Spielberg's hectic schedule over the next three years, I'm not sure. If Ford then pulls out of the series, Lord Lucas could always sign up Philip Coccioletti, very much of a Ford Mk II, in his Italian movie, *Mystere*, with ex-Bond girl Carole Bouquet. Phil is American; it's just his name and, for the moment, his career that are Italian.

Indy I

What was I saying about the *Raiders of the Lost Ark* video going through the Transatlantic roof and selling about 400,000 copies — when 25,000 is considered average and *Flashdance's* 200,000 a record-breaker...? Forget it. Last figures I heard was that *Raiders* has now sold 500,000 and is still rising. It's on video-disc as well; twice, in fact, on the standard disc and the Constant Angular Velocity laser-disc, which allows it to be played frame by frame. In Britain, the original orders numbered a record-breaking 60,000. But sales over here are now around the 100,000 region. That's gold in them thar videos...

Other gold-cassette winners in America (remember that's only 25,000 sold, equalling a million bucks) are *Creepshow*, *Amityville II* and *Halloween*.



William Shatner as Admiral James T. Kirk in the original *Star Trek* — The Motion Picture. He is soon to return, along with the rest of *The Enterprise* crew, in the third *Trek* film.

Tony Crawley's THINGS TO COME

3rd Time Lucky?

No, not really ... Considering that director Richard Fleischer is the only guy around in the last 50s' binge, his *Amityville 3-D* must rate as a bitter disappointment. Unless, of course, you're liable to be greatly turned on by having a frisbee in your lap. (A frisbee? Couldn't he have come up with something more modern ... like a boomerang?) Oh, sure, Dick has a few other tricks up his tri-di sleeve but nothing that advances the 3-D cause from ... well, from the time he made *Arena* in ... 1953!

I suppose one could say that the new(fish) ArriVision 3-D system is the kind of improvement one might reasonably expect thirty years on, but the use of it, not to mention the rag-bag, warmed-over (not a sequel, it states here) storyline of *Amityville 3D* is both tiresome and tiring. A send-up of the daft series could have been better.

I'm afraid that the film has to count as yet another 3-D flopperoo. Such much for 1983-D! Business was average enough when the movie opened in the United States, when the tri-hard fans trooped in. By the second week, even *The Smurfs* and *The Magic Flute* was generating more box-office juice. The goods news, though, is that this Dino De Laerum movie has to be the last of the Amityvillians. Because with a little help from the *Pottergeist* guys (Mike Wood, Jeff Jarvis, etc) the old house is blown apart. Furniture, bricks, mortar, oh yeah and a few bodies, in your lap time! I tell you, you just don't know where to put your popcorn anymore.

3D TV

If 3-D is going to be any kind of success, television seems the place for it. That's the thinking of American tv producer Fred Silverman, one-time chief of each of the three American networks. Programmes he's working on now include a 3-D animation show—made in Japan, naturally—full of *E.T.*-ish kiddies and robots. Except they're called ... *Bobots*.

If Japan's responsible, shouldn't that be *Bobots*?

Connery on Bonds

"Roger and I differ in our playing," said Sean Connery on his Paris stopover during his Bond comeback tour. "They open (*Octopussy*) with a marvellous *sequête* that could take place in Nicaragua but it doesn't relate to the



"My name's Bond, James Bond" "So is mine!" Roger Moore (above) looks set to return as 007 in the next Broccoli production, *From A View To A Kill*, while it isn't as likely Sean Connery (below) will don the Bond topee again after *Never Say Never* Again.



story. They have good visual gags and stunts. We wanted ours more in the vein of *From Russia With Love*—strong character and humour based on credibility.

"I knew what made the character tick. The work, in terms of character, was all done way back, 21 years ago when I did the first two films. The thought of doing it again intrigued me. I'm not absolutely certain why—maybe it was revenge. ... Maybe there's a little sweetness of revenge on Broccoli!" And then some. *Never* looks like making more loot abroad (say \$70m) than in America (about \$50m). And Sean has, I'm sure, more than an 007th of that.

Where's Jack?

Missing from all the glitter of *Never's* opening in Monaco and Paris and elsewhere on the publicity-trip was the film's producer, former lawyer, Jack Schwartzman. Maybe Connery explained why ... "To have actors, technicians, an entire ensemble, enthusiastic, working together for a film is one of the great pleasures," he commented. "What is not a pleasure is when you're dealing with incompetence and stupidity. I was subject to some of it on this last film ... probably the least said about it, the better. I've spent most of my time dealing with lawyers in the past five years, perhaps I should keep stumm."

Did I Say That II?

Apologies to one and all, and novelist-scenarist Marc Behm in particular, for calling him British in a recent column ... so recent that my mistake was pointed out to me before my *Starburst 65* actually reached me. (Now that's really rubbing it in). Marc Behm is American and has lived in France (like all the best people) for the last thirty years. It's his book, *The Ice Maiden*, which *Diva* director Jean-Jacques Beineix has chosen for his first American movie. Behm's film scripts, by the way, include such varied output as *Charade* (written with Peter Stone; 1963) and two for Richard Lester, *Help!* (1965) and *The Three Musketeers* (1974).

Still, as Mae West must have said, or was it Pia Zadora, boobs have their uses. I got a free book out of this one. London publisher Maxim Jakubowski, who pointed out my slip sent me one of his Zomba Books' Black Box Thrillers, containing three Marc Behm novels, including *The Ice Maiden* (£4.95 in paperback). Unless I'm mistaken again, that's the same Zomba which published a recent tome about Steven Spielberg and has one in the works on Harrison Ford. If I should call Ford Irish next month, you'll understand I'm after another freebie ... of that upcoming Alan McKenzie book, okay? (Not a word to Maxim).

Time for Porto

I'm hardly back home from the Brussels festival – my clothes are still at the laundry – when the first news arrives from Portugal about the fourth Porto fantasy gathering, better known as Fantasporto. Porto was obviously the role-model for the fledgling Brussels event and from first glance at the competition films, Porto is now something of a Brussels II. Four of the same films, including the Brussels winner, *The Outcasts* by Robert Wynne Simmons, have been invited, plus Belgian animator Raoul Servais serving on the jury again.

Competition, from a dozen nations, looks strong – Canada's knock-out *Rock & Rule* cartoon, Argento's *Tenebrae*, a Swiss vampire trip, Czechoslovakia's *Mystery of the Carpathian Castle*, a Portuguese entry, of course – and almost bound to be among the winners, *The Third Key*, by another of those lively Yugoslav directors, Zoran Tadic.

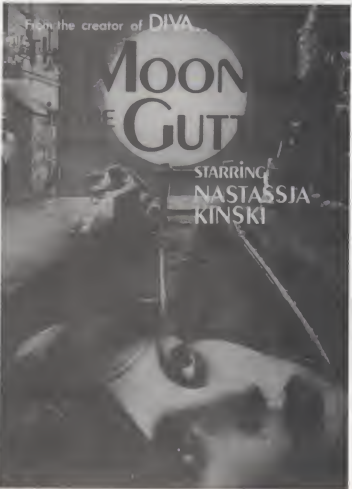
Nothing so far entered by America – apart from a retrospective of Corman and, in collaboration with the Portuguese Cinematheque, a retro of all the early Universal fantasies.

Fast Takes

Kurt Vonnegut stalked out of De Palma's *Scarface*, during the chainsaw setpiece. Film got booted at the same New York opening, particularly for its dedication to Howard Hawks and writer Ben Hecht for their '32 version, which made its point without so much plasma ... Bo (don't get excited) Svensson (not Derek, you see) is making sf waves in Buenos Aires, of all places. The flicker is *Wizard Wars* ... John Boorman's other daughter, Telshe (not *Dream One's* acting Katrina) helped script David Goodis' *Raving Beauty* for French director Joel Garges ... *Blade Runner* robot and Disney mermaid, Darryl Hannah, moves up-market for *The Pope of Greenwich Village* with the terrific Mickey Rourke ... Bo (do get excited) Derek is Hollywood's next mermaid ... Don Franks, great voice for Mok, the Jaggersque star of Canada's *Rock & Rule* cartoon, gets his face on screen in Tibor Takacs' 1984-ish *Tomorrow Man* ... 2001's Bowman, Keir Dullea, alive and well and in another movie for Greek director Nicos Mastorakis, *Blind Date*. "It goes," sez Nico, "beyond the infinity of darkness." Take your torches ... When *The Day After* grabbed the second (to the M*A*S*H finale) highest viewing figures in American tv history, guess which movies cashed in on 50 million viewers to advertise their charms? *Never Say Never Again* and *Christine* ... painter-director Terry Gilliam's first non-Python movie, *Brazil*, shooting in London (huh?). This time his star is bigger than Cleese, Palin, Idle, Chapman, Jones all rolled together. Chapman named Robert De Niro ...



Top: In Clive A. Smith's Canadian cartoon, *Rock 'n' Rule*, the character of Angel is voiced by Susan Roman (with a theme song from Debbie Harry). Above: Don Oppen and Klaus Kinski in a scene from *Android*. Below: The publicity art for Jean Jacques Beineix's latest.



Hilarious!

If young Beineix, who made such a horse's posterior out of another black thriller – David Goodis' *Moon in the Gutter* – can revive his *Diva* dexterity, we should be in for a great time with Cora Dana, alias *The Ice Maiden*. She's almost a clone of Catherine Deneuve in *The Hunger* except Behn's book is far more uproarious fun. Born in 1876, Cora the croupier is planning to rob a New York casino today with another ever-young vampire, dating back to the 1600s. But how to get up to the penthouse to make the snatch on the 50th floor? Simple – turn into bats and fly. Which is where the oldest blood-sucker comes in, Brand. He knows all the incantations for such metamorphosing (into bats and wolves). He ought to; he's been around since 1148 and learned the Nosferatu arts with the rest of the vampires in Sherwood Forest. Yeah, Robin Hood's gang was a bunch of vampires! And old Brand, in fact, was Friar Tuck, no less! He won the name as he disguised himself as a monk – "who would suspect a holy friar of demonic intent?" – and forever tucked a napkin around his neck before fangng any prey to protect his habit from any overflow of gore!

Everything goes well enough during the caper except, of course, for one little thing. A gang, complete with helicopter, are already robbing the joint. Oh yeah, one other thing. There's an epidemic of bats in town and the populace is up in zealous arms, trying to put 'em down ...

Take my word, *The Ice Maiden* is one helluva rippin' yarn. Witty, sassy, sexy, thrilling and, as our vampiric gang get mixed up with the all-American tradition of the office party, hilarious. Beineix should find it difficult to ruin this one ... although alas, the French do have a penchant for taking the best American pulp thrillers and striving too hard to make them more sociologically or philosophically important.

Great Scott II

Italy, at least, has forgiven Ridley's brother, Tony Scott, for *The Hunger*. He starts his next movie in Rome next March. *Men On Fire*. Can't have La Deneuve in it, then, that's for sure ...

Xtro Triumph

Well, he didn't get much more than a Special SPFX Mention – and a thoroughly good time – when staying in Brussels a full week, but Harry Bromley Davenport ran off with the top, Golden Unicorn prize at the 13th Paris fantasy fest. Best thespys were Don Oppen and Bobbie Bresse for *Android* and *Mausoleum* (which also won the Special Jury and Public Prizes). Canada's *Siege* was voted best script and won the Critics' trophy. L'Ecran Fantastique

Tony Crawley's THINGS TO COME

magazine gave its award to Peter Walker's *House of the Long Shadows*; Ennio Morricone (who else?) got the music nod for his *Hundra* thunder and somehow Juan Piquer Simón's latest Spanish movie, which shall remain nameless, is said to have had the best effects. I don't believe it!

Those Damned Videos!

Did I say that? Chapter One. Here's one last try at putting the record straight about the video-promos for Michael Jackson records. 1: Steven Spielberg did not, as previously reported, direct any of them – no matter what top French rock star Johnny Hallyday tells me. 2: The "Billie Jean" number was helmed by one Steve Baron. 3: "Beat It" and the more recent McCartney and Jackson's "Say, Say, Say" were directed by ex-commercials man, Bob Giraldi.

I know all this now because Giraldis PR types are rather more on the boil than Jackson's... and Giraldis has now won himself a big, flashprincin' movie to make, *Night Dreams*.

And 4: Jackson's "Thriller" vid, a new, 14-minute and allegedly \$500,000 video based on that hit cut, and including added "scarey music" by the mighty Elmer Bernstein, and, American-Werewolf-in-America effects by Rick Baker's EFX, has been turned out – inside out and upside down – by none other than Spielberg mate, John Landis. The Jackson PR folk, though, like to insist that young Michael did his own storyboards; a likely story.

And 5: the one-hour documentary about all that, *The Making of Michael Jackson's Thriller*, featuring the Landis film and some of the work of Barron and Giraldi, was (phew!) directed by a certain Jerry Kramer.

Now I wonder who's going to helm No 6 – Mike and the rest of the Jackson's Pepsi-Cola commercial, part of the deal for Pepsi backing the come-back stage tour of Mike, Tito, Jackie, Jermaine, Randy and Marlon...?

Tele-Corner

Lou Ferrigno's *Trauma Centre* is being rested. Not killed, just going in for an oil-change while Rod Taylor's *Masquerade* cop-art show gets going... Greyer than the old days, but no longer worrying about his mid-age spread, John Steed that was, Patrick Macnee, having a fine, fun time in the new business-world send-up show, *Empire*, with Dennis Dugan, Disney's one-time UFO, *Unidentified Flying Oddball* or *Spaceman* and King Arthur, as we knew it here in old Blighty...

Lampooned

Mention of Bob Giraldi reminds me of an item (perfectly correct in all detail and trenchant views) in the late, lamented cinema magazine of ours. *National Lampoon* fans might be interested (still?) in whatever the hell happened to the second, official *Lampoon* film, *National Lampoon Goes To The Movies*.

In short: it didn't. It went to cable-vision instead, highly truncated as

National Lampoon's Movie Madness. *Madness* is right. The 1981 film still stinks. Bob Giraldi made two of the four alleged send-ups of film styles in the original one featuring former *Lampoon*er now better known as the *Local Hero* star, Peter Riegert).

But as I surmised all those months ago in cinema, the crucial fault with the flick lay in the other two sketches directed, if that is the word for it, by Orson Welles' chum, Henry Jaglom. The second of these, featuring Jag-

lom's equally untalented actor-brother, Michael Emil, has been completely cut from the cable version. Yeah, that bad!

Last Word Dept

"What about my Scots accent?" muttered Sean Connery at his Paris Bond conference. "Oh, it's stronger this time than it was before? Well, I suppose you get more relaxed the nearer you get to the grave."

Jodorowsky Returns

Silent for far too long (one cannot really count *Tusk*; 1980) Alexandro Jodorowsky is coming back... Who? Oh! c'mon, where have you been...? (And don't say: growing up!) Even if you never seen his films, you keep seeing his name in any feature about *Dune*, Dan O'Bannon or H.R. Giger. Jodorowsky is the (take a deep breath) actor-circus clown-mime-painter-sculptor-composer-writer-comic strip artist-director who so nearly made *Dune* ten years ago with Dan and Giger, long before Dino got his hands on the rights.

Instead of the *Dune* that might have been, we have to remember Jodorowsky for *El Topo* and *The Holy Mountain*, two of the most literal fantasies made in the twilight of the acid 60s. After globe-trotting his talent around (somewhat akin to a thinner, bearded Orson Welles), Jodorowsky has now arranged Mexican-Italian backing for his next screen venture, *Holy Blood*. Remember *El Topo*? *The Mole* ran red with castrations, beheadings, shootings and mass murder...

Jodorowsky is frequently referred to in print as being Mexican. He's not. I'll let him explain it. "My parents were Russian. I was born in Iquique, a small town of 2,000 people in Chile. I lived in this desert for ten years. The children



didn't accept me, because I was 'Russian'. I moved to Santiago for ten years, studied philosophy, psychology, worked as a circus clown, formed my own marionette and mime theatres. The young men didn't accept me because I was a 'Jew'. I went to Paris for ten years, worked with Marcel Marceau, Maurice Chevalier, founded the Panic Movement and realised one of the best four-hour happenings ever made. The

French didn't accept me because I was 'Chilean'. I moved to Mexico for ten years, directed a hundred plays, wrote three books, a comic-strip and directed my first two films. The Mexicans didn't accept me because I was 'French'. I moved to America for my next film – the Americans think I'm 'Mexican'. "After ten years, I'll move to another planet. They won't accept me because they'll think I'm 'American'." So it goes.



Top: Director Alexandro Jodorowsky in *El Topo*/*The Mole* (1971). Above: A bizarre scene from *The Holy Mountain* (1973).

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BOMB M

A Starburst Interview with **GUY ALIMO**

Technical Adviser on "Never Say Never Again"

From the amazing rocket-powered platform to Sean Connery's slick black motorbike *Never Say Never Again* featured a terrific collection of hardware. Technical Adviser Guy Alimo talks about his contribution of specialist knowledge on this exciting James Bond film. Interview by John Brosnan.

Over the years many people have written to me asking for advice on how to break into the film industry. I don't know why they think I possess the secret formula – if I did I'd be working in the industry myself. The truth is that luck as well as talent often plays an important part in gaining one an entry – a case of being in the right place at the right time. For example, Guy Alimo – technical adviser on *Never Say Never Again* – owes his now flourishing film career to a single lunch.

"I'd met a man called Evzen Kolar who invited me to lunch at Elstree Studios to discuss buying an option on one of my novels. He just happened to have with him another of my books called *Cruise* which has a Cruise missile on the cover and he suggested I meet the director of the film he'd just started working on because Cruise missiles played an important role in the plot. The director was Irvin Kershner and the film was, of course, *Never Say Never Again*.

"So within a few days I met Irvin Kershner and showed him the films I had of Cruise missiles under test which had been given to me by people in the Cruise program earlier on and as a result of that meeting he asked me if I'd like to become an adviser on the film about the missiles. I arrived for a couple of hours to do a few drawings – this was in August 1982 – and I stayed on the picture until 1983. And now I'm working as a technical adviser on another ►





Far left: American agent Felix Leiter (Bernie Casey) pilots one of the rocket-powered platforms launched as a missile from a submarine. Left: Jack Patachi (Gavin O'Hart) uses his medically transplanted 'eye print' to give him access to a computer coding machine by retinal identification. Insert: Largo's men carefully manoeuvre the atomic warhead into the water. Above: This motorised underwater craft is equipped for its plunge into the subterranean channel. Below: James Bond (Sean Connery) in action on his slick black motorbike.





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film—Tobe Hooper's *The Space Vampire*. I was very fortunate; one lunch and I was in the film industry.

"I was right at the beginning of *Never Say Never* when all the drawings were being issued and in fact I did some of the drawings myself, mainly of the missiles, working very closely with the art department. I provided them source material, photographs and so on from which they could design and build the missiles. I actually supervised the building of the full-scale missiles. We also built half-scale flying models for some scenes and there were smaller models made by the effects people in California, Apogee Incorporated. The optical effects were supervised by Dave Dryer who works with John Dykstra. By coincidence I'm now working with John Dykstra on this picture, *Space Vampire*...

"The script had sketched in the idea of air-launched Cruise missiles being dropped from a B52 bomber and these missiles were to be loaded onto the plane from an American base in Britain. But I first suggested that instead of using a B52 they should use the Rockwell B1 bomber as that would be far more up to date and similarly I felt they needed some detailed information on how these missiles operate. And leading from that I was asked to provide overall technical advice on a host of different matters, including working very closely with the technical dialogue of the picture."

"I asked if the film company had received official military assistance in the making of the picture. 'It wasn't really necessary. In terms of the Cruise missile itself I already had film from General Dynamics showing how it operated. Boeing very kindly lent us film of the air-launched Cruise being dropped from a B52 which was very helpful and in the case of the US Air Force I had already been over to the joint Cruise Missile Project Office in Crystal City and received a tremendous amount of advice and briefing from them. But we didn't ask for JCMPO involvement in the film because we didn't need it really. We could make everything we needed ourselves from our own resources and, of course, we had to twist much of what was technically accurate for the sake of our storyline..."

In what way? I asked. "Well, for example, the sequence where SPECTRE's man uses a computer to arm and program the missiles isn't authentic, to be honest. The programming and target selection is, of course, done by the Department of Defence in Washington through its targeting team and the missiles themselves are programmed by an individual program. Also we had the missiles being loaded with their warheads from the top whereas a Cruise missile is designed in exactly the opposite way—the warheads are put in through the belly. But I had to accept that as a directorial requirement although technically it was incorrect. And so then we had to develop a complicated loading system which we built using an actual radio-controlled robot."

"There was also the problem of the launching of the missiles; now in our script the requirement was that the missiles were launched over Britain, which would never happen in any case, and then fly to a target in the Atlantic. Now the only conceivable reason for this that I felt could be incorporated was that the missiles were released towards an Eastern test range but because it was felt necessary for the film to have the missiles cruise very low over the British mainland before flying out over the Atlantic Westwards we therefore had to abandon reality..."

"Also if you work out the actual flying time of a Cruise missile to its target you'll see we cheated a bit there too. They travel at something like 500 mph to 550 mph but in order to increase the pace of the film we skipped a few hours of flying time."

I remarked that the low level flying scenes over Britain looked impressive. "Yes, they were. They did that with a helicopter. Dave Dryer was responsible for that. He went up in a hired helicopter and flew low level over the countryside, and then later the film was speeded up. It was very convincing, I thought. And the models of the missiles which were matted into the footage were convincing too. They were built in California under Dave's supervision as was the model of the B1 bomber..."

"Originally the idea was to shoot the flying scenes

using 11-foot-long half-scale Cruise missiles but it became a real technical headache getting them to fly. We tried various tests here at Elstree which in some cases ended hysterically. First we fired them with explosives—we shot them off angled ramps rather like the Germans fired the doodlebugs—the V1s—in the Second World War. We launched them over the reservoir on the back lot and they splashed down into the water; others were fired along guide wires with the wire above them so as to give that cruising effect over the water, but it all just got more and more difficult until it was realized the only way we could do it effectively was to fly them as radio-controlled flying models from helicopters over water or alternatively we would fly them across the vast tank in Malta. But after a lot of discussion it was decided, because of other complex problems within the film itself, to use miniatures and to matte them into the background scenery."

I asked why there wasn't a shot of the missiles hitting the water before being picked up by SPECTRE's men. "Well, we did film that, funnily enough. It was filmed in the Bahamas and shot towards the end of the film. It was done with an underwater team with the camera pointing up towards the surface but it's remarkable how difficult it was to get a convincing shot of the missile's impact into the water. And logically, of course, they would disintegrate on impact. Even though they're very tough in their construction they would, if they hit the water at 500 mph, bounce first and then disintegrate. But again it was important for the storyline that they enter the water intact and sink slowly to the bottom. So the scenes were shot of the impacts but the director didn't think they were convincing enough and because we were then very near to the end of the shooting schedule it was decided to leave them out rather than go back and shoot them again."

"We'd hoped to do more submarine sequences too, preferably with a large model submarine filmed in the largest tank available in Britain. For example, I would have liked to have shown the human capsules being launched underwater and so on. But this came towards the end of the picture and by then it was over-budget for a number of different reasons and so a lot of stuff was not shot."

I asked whose idea the human capsules—which Bond and Leiter use to reach the shore from the American sub—had been. "They were in the original script that I saw. They'd first been designed by Philip Harrison, who was the original production designer on the picture when I started. I then obtained some stock footage of a Polaris test from the Ministry of Defence and modified the capsules' design, under the supervision of Michael White, the art director, so that we could incorporate them into the Polaris footage. I thought if we wrapped the capsules in shells identical to the Polaris missiles and then split the shells apart to reveal the capsules once they were in the air it would look quite convincing, and this in fact did work out well."

"It was a very complicated sequence to shoot. We had to build two full-scale capsules for some of the shots. They had massive steel frameworks and were very awkward to handle. One of them was fully working in the sense that all its thrusters and smoke ejectors worked. In the studio it had to be mounted on a gimbal platform in front of a very big blue matte screen. It was also taken out to Spain where we did the actual landings with a crane. The long shots were done with miniatures and again that was Dave Dryer's work. He constructed these beautiful little models of both capsules and actors. It took a lot of skill to match up the models with the full-scale capsules shot in Spain and Elstree."

Was a model used in the sequence where the ➤



Technical Adviser Guy Alimo with some of the underwater hardware used in *Never Say Never* Again.

American sub bombs Largo's cast? "No, that was done optically with just a matte painting, animation and so on. It shows you what can be done optically – it was very impressive. It saved us making a model but probably ended up costing more than a model. Optical shots are very expensive but it was quicker that way and we were running out of time. For that sequence I got a film of a test of a missile system that Vickers were offering to the Royal Navy. The system was called SLAM – Submarine Launched Air Missile – and it could retract into the fin of a nuclear submarine. So that showed us it would be possible to bombard a shore position from a submarine."

Apart from the missiles landing in the water were there any other scenes that were shot but not used in the finished film? "Not really. There were one or two more detailed sequences that took place after the warheads had been picked up by Largo's men: shots of the warheads being looked at and checked and so on. These were later dropped, and so was some of

the footage of the arming procedure that takes place later. We'd had to invent for the film an arming device that would generate symbology and lighting and so forth that would show up on film underwater and also be intelligible to international audiences..."

Was he involved at all in the design of the interior of Largo's boat? "That was mainly designed by John Wood, one of the assistant art directors. My main contribution was the computer room on the yacht. Again it was John's design but based on suggestions from me on the type of computer to use. It was very much a team effort. I also worked very closely with Rob Dickenson – he was in charge of the video and computer effects, as in the sequence where Bond and Largo duel with the world domination video game. That was Irvin Kershner's concept but Rob was responsible for the computer-generated imagery and Dave Dryer was responsible for the overall optical effects utilising Rob's imagery. A very complicated sequence

indeed. And complicated too for the lighting cameraman who had to position and light the actors in such a way that would anticipate the later addition of the optical effects..."

I then asked about Mr Alimo's current project, *The Space Vampire* (also known as *Anti-Body*). "It's too early to say much about it. In fact it's very much under wraps. I'm again overall technical adviser on the picture and there is obviously an important space context to the movie. It's a fascinating story and in many ways requires even more technical input than the Bond picture..."

Judging from the number of diagrams of space shuttles around the production office I felt safe in speculating that the shuttle played an important role in *The Space Vampire*. "Well, like *Never* it's a very contemporary story embracing lots of familiar equipment, such as the space shuttle but I wouldn't say at this stage that it's important to focus on that. We started work a month ago – we're in preproduction doing our designs and drawing. No



Top: James Bond (Sean Connery) zooms into action astride his super-powerful motorcycle. Above: Bond with Felix Leiter (Bernie Casey) and Domino (Kim Basinger) aboard a submarine in search of SPECTRE's hideout.

stars have been announced for it as far as I know. We start shooting in February which is very quick considering we only began a month ago. At the earliest it will be out at the end of 1984 but more likely some time in '85."

And what else is on the drawing board for him? "I'm working on a project with Irvin Kershner but it's early days yet. I also hope to have a movie off the ground shortly based on my first book called *The Hunting of Salyut 7* and I've sold an option on another idea of mine called *Stokhausen* which is a science fiction story set in a post-Armageddon world 100 years from now. That's in the process of development now."

Finally, what was the general reaction of the *Never Say Never Again* film unit to the film's great success? "I think all of us are relieved, to be quite honest. Because when a film has had all the problems this one has had, especially the legal problems, it's very encouraging for the team who made it to see that the public like it. I was with Irvin Kershner the other day and he'd just returned from the European promotion and was very pleased at the reception the film's had in Europe."

Will there be another Bond from the *Never Say Never* team? "That I don't know. I think only the producer Jack Schwartzman knows the answer to that one..."

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John Tulloch and Manuel Alvarado

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APOCALYPSE THEN!

A Look Back at How Movies Have Handled the BOMB...

Feature by John Brosnan



With Nicholas Meyer's *The Day After* the Bomb movie has come with a bang. This genre flourished during the 1950s and early 60s but, with a few exceptions, faded away in the mid-60s. Discussing the virtual disappearance of Bomb films in my book *Future Tense* in 1977 I said: "Over the years the fear of an imminent atomic doom has receded from the minds of most people..." But no sooner had I written those words than it seemed that the Bomb was suddenly back in the public consciousness, and today, as we all know, the debate over atomic weapons is raging with an even greater intensity than in the 1950s... in the West at least.

Just why there was this 10-year period when everyone apparently stopped worrying about the Bomb is a bit of a mystery. It's possible that the Vietnam war acted as a distraction from the mid-1960s onwards but once it was over, public concern shifted back to things nuclear, focusing first on the dangers of atomic power (helped by the Three Mile Island incident and Jane Fonda's movie *The China Syndrome*) before returning to the Bomb. Or maybe it's because a whole new younger generation has simply got around to discovering afresh the potential menace of a situation their parents had grown apathetic towards over the years.

But whatever the reason the Bomb is definitely back in the news and with it the Bomb movie. After the success of *WarGames* there were at least a dozen Bomb movies put on the drawing boards in

Hollywood and elsewhere, including a remake of *On the Beach*, but the one that led the pack, and therefore got all the attention, was the telemovie *The Day After*.

I have very mixed feelings about its director, Nicholas Meyer: he made one of my favourite genre movies, *Time After Time*, and also one of my least favourite – *The Wrath of Khan*, and my reactions to *The Day After* are similarly mixed. A great deal of abuse was heaped on it by British TV critics, politicians and others; it was called a "second rate disaster film" and a "badly-made soap opera" and while it's true that the first half is pretty feeble (apparently Meyer cut a whole hour – "gleefully" – from that section) the second half is quite powerful. And unusually for an American TV movie it was uncompromisingly bleak. There was no last-minute happy ending for the survivors, no sudden miracle-cure for radiation sickness; instead it finished on a note of true despair. It's this uncompromising approach that, in the final analysis, elevates *The Day After* from being a "mere American disaster movie" to something rather important. I also think that was the reason for the tremendous fuss the film created in both the USA and Britain. After all, about a year ago we had a mini-series on our screens called *World War III*, starring David Soul and Rock Hudson, and it made no impact whatsoever.

Some critics complained that *The Day After* wasn't horrific enough; that conditions after a nuclear war would be infinitely worse than those it

portrayed. That may be true but if the film had been completely realistic it would never have been shown at all. By toning down the horrors in order for the film to be screened on American TV Meyer ended up reaching a far greater number of people than if he'd made an "18" rated feature film on the subject (by contrast the 1965 BBC TV film *The War Game*, which I'll discuss later, still hasn't received a TV showing).

The first Bomb movie came shortly after the arrival of the Bomb itself – in 1946. Called *The Beginning or the End* it was a sanitised description of how the atom bomb was developed. Though done in a dismal semi-documentary style it wasn't very informative as most of the information was still classified. The film makers weren't even allowed to see a photograph of an atomic explosion, which was a problem for them seeing as they had to simulate such an explosion on the screen. All that the effects man, A. Arnold Gillespie, had to work on was the fact that the Bomb formed a "mushroom-shaped cloud". After a lot of thought he remembered an old Tarzan film he'd worked on where the apeman had wrestled underwater with a mechanical crocodile. When Tarzan had slashed the reptile's neck, small sacs beneath the skin had released a dye that looked like blood. Gillespie remembered that the dye had formed a mushroom cloud as it floated upwards so he utilised this effect for his atomic explosion. He released dye in a tank of water, filmed it then superimposed it over background scenery.

Ironically, the shot so impressed top officers of the Manhattan Project (the code name for the bomb

development programme) that they used it later in their own instructional films for the air force.

The Beginning or the End tried to create the impression that the Bomb was in good hands and that everything was going to be alright. Of course in 1946 the Bomb was only in American hands but by the end of the decade the Russians had it too and suddenly the prospect of an atomic war between the two super powers seemed very real. Everyone became very pessimistic about the future of the human race and this mood was soon reflected in the cinema. One of the first of the "warning" movies was *Five*, written and directed by Arch Oboler who was then famous for his plays on American radio. It's a talky, moralising film about five survivors of an atomic war who get together in a cliff top mansion and talk about why "it all went wrong". For a time these five symbols of humanity – a pregnant woman, a murderer, an embittered idealist, a dying man and a token black man – get on peacefully but then World War Four breaks out between them, leaving only the girl and the idealist. The film's message is a pretty obvious one – that people should learn to live in peace with each other – but Oboler doesn't explain *how* this is to be achieved.

A much better "warning" movie was the classic *The Day the Earth Stood Still* but its message was just as dubious and unhelpful as the one in *Five*. Klaatu (Michael Rennie), the alien emissary, spells it out in the final scenes: "Soon one of your nations will apply atomic power to rockets. Up to now we have not cared how you solved your petty squabbles but if you threaten to extend your violence this Earth of yours will be reduced to a burnt-out cinder. Your choice is simple. Join us and live in peace. Or pursue your present course and face obliteration."

Yes, well... there's not much you can reply to that except to point out the slight moral flaw in the argument. Basically Klaatu's message is: "You're a danger to us. Unless you stop being a danger we'll destroy you," which is the usual excuse given when one nation declares war on another. This suggests that Klaatu's lot are just like us only they have more powerful weapons. So what gives them the moral right to come and tell us how to behave?

The Day the Earth Stood Still started a small trend in snooty aliens coming to earth with warnings to shape up or snuff out. Most bizarre of all is the glowing blob in *The Space Children* (1958). As aliens go it isn't very active – all it does is lie around in a beach cave slowly getting bigger. But it also takes over the minds of a group of children whose parents work for a nearby missile installation. The alien gives them sufficient mental powers to wreck the missile programme which it regards as a threat to interstellar peace. But like Klaatu's people the alien is no pacifist – it enables one of the children to kill his father during a beating. Again the message seems to be – Might is Right.

Though a lot of movies in the 1950s dealt with the threat of atomic war it was rare for one of them to actually show such a war occurring. In fact I can only think of one that does – a cheap and awful 1952 production called *Invasion USA*. A group of apathetic New Yorkers in a bar suddenly find themselves in the middle of World War 3, courtesy of a lot of stock footage of collapsing buildings and explosions etc – and die one by one. But, whew, folks, it's alright; it turns out to have been an illusion created by a hypnotist in the bar. Their apathy eliminated the drinkers begin to prepare for the real war...

But most other film makers preferred a more oblique approach to atomic warfare, showing only its aftermath or by treating it euphemistically. Thus



Opposite page: Slim Pickens discovers two nuclear warheads in *Dr Strangelove Or How I Learned To Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*. Top: The US army prepares for War of the Worlds. Above: *The Martian* war machines attack!

in movies like *War of the Worlds* and *When Worlds Collide* the apocalypse is caused by extraterrestrial agents rather than the Bomb itself (both films were originally to have been made in the 1930s but had to wait until the paranoid 1950s before audiences were judged ready for them). And in movies like *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms*, *Them!*, *It Came from Beneath the Sea* and *Godzilla*, the Bomb was represented by various monsters, all of which were brought to life or created by atomic tests and radiation...

It's a funny thing about atomic radiation – the 1950s Hollywood variety that is, which is not to be confused with the real thing – it turned men into steel (*The Most Dangerous Man Alive*), it made men shrink (*The Incredible Shrinking Man*), it made them grow (*The Amazing Colossal Man*); it did all manner of strange things to people, animals and insects but

as far as I know it didn't actually make anyone radioactive (unless you count Mickey Rooney; I have vague memories of him getting caught in an A-Bomb test in the desert in a movie called, I think, *The Atomic Kid*, with the result he glowed in the dark...).

Considering that the fear of an imminent atomic war was very real in the 1950s it's surprising how quickly the more exploitive Hollywood film makers managed to turn it into just another science fiction gimmick. Leading the pack in this respect was, naturally, Roger Corman. One of his first movies was *The Day the World Ended*, made in 1955, which was a down-market version of *Five*. Again only five people have survived an atomic war and they gather in a house designed by a scientist to withstand radiation. A giant (well, tallish) three-eyed mutant has evil designs on the scientist's beautiful daughter

THE
STEVEN
SPIELBERG
STORY



Above: After the bomb in Richard Lester's nuclear black comedy, *The Bed Sitting Room* (1969).
Below: Edward Judd and Janet Munro in *The Day the Earth Caught Fire* (1961).



and kidnaps her but before he can do whatever it is that three-eyed mutants do to beautiful women he's destroyed in a sudden downpour. The rain also washes away the radioactivity and the hero and the heroine are able to leave the house and go forth into the world, presumably to multiply...

Some critics—the type that think Roger Corman is a genius—have good words to say about *The Day the World Ended* but I think it's a tedious and tacky movie, and not even absurd enough to be amusing.

But Corman's *Teenage Caveman* (1958) is amusing. Who could fail to laugh at the sight of Robert 'UNCLE' Vaughn running around in an animal skin pretending to be a teenage caveman (he was 26 at the time)? The movie's big surprise is that it isn't set in prehistoric times as it seems to be but in a post-nuclear holocaust world. Some surprise. Variety liked it though, adding it was:

"... somewhat surprisingly, a plea for international

co-operation in terms of the dangers of atomic radiation." Yeah, sure it was.

A much more serious film on the same themes was *The World, the Flesh and the Devil*, made also in 1958. Written and directed by Ronald MacDougall and based very loosely on M. P. Shiel's 1901 novel *The Purple Cloud* it is an evocative—even subversive, for its time—movie about three survivors of an atomic war in New York. What creates the conflict among them is that the woman (Inger Stevens) chooses the black man (Harry Belafonte) instead of the white racist (Mel Ferrer). The two men fight it out among the empty buildings of Manhattan but, surprisingly, the film ends with all three of them walking off into the sunset together—a rare movie example of rationalism winning out over emotions.

The major after-the-Bomb movie of the 1950s came in 1959—*On the Beach*. Based on the novel by

Nevil Shute it was a serious attempt by producer/director Stanley Kramer to treat the subject of atomic war in a realistic and unsensational manner. He doesn't completely succeed—like all of Kramer's films it is marred by ponderousness and an over-developed sense of its own worth—but few other Bomb films have come close to duplicating its chilling apocalyptic mood. Watching it you really do feel that the world is dying—that it's all over for Mankind.

Perhaps it's because I'm Australian that I find the movie so affecting—I remember when I read the book, when I was in my early teens, it gave me nightmares. Not about atomic war but about the idea of Australia being the only country left in the world! And being Australian also makes it impossible for me to watch the picnic sequence—where everyone sings *Waltzing Matilda* over and over again—without cringing with embarrassment.

Probably the best sequences are those where the American sub, commanded by Gregory Peck, makes a trip back to California to investigate the source of a radio signal. The crew hope to find survivors but there are none; the signal had been caused by a window shade blowing against a morse code transmitter.

Also memorable are the scenes of the people of Melbourne queuing for death pills. (As co-star Ava Gardner said at the time, much to the horror of the Australian press: "Melbourne is the perfect place to make a film about the end of the world.") It will be interesting to see if the new TV version of *On the Beach* comes close to the power of Kramer's 1959 film.

Concern about the Bomb continued into the 1960s and so did the bomb movies. Roger Corman was still at it—in 1960 he made *The Last Woman on Earth* (I'm sorry, I'll read that again) which was a cheap rip-off of *The World, the Flesh and the Devil*. The woman in question, and her husband, survive an atomic war that kills off practically everyone else in the world because they happened to be SCUBA diving at the time. Another man turns up and... etc, etc. Terrible.

A far superior After-the-Bomb movie was AIP's *Panic in the Year Zero* though its basic message was rather distasteful. A visual handbook for the now popular Survivalist movement it starred Ray Milland as the head of a family who knows exactly what to do when the Bomb falls. No sooner have they witnessed the destruction of Los Angeles (suggested by off-screen flashes) from the safety of the hills than Pop springs into ruthless action as if he's been waiting eagerly for this moment all his life. "It's going to be survival of the fittest," he tells his shocked family as he breaks into a gun shop. They're unwilling to adopt his cold-blooded attitude to other people but then the daughter is kidnapped and raped by a gang of thugs and the family is united by its desire for vengeance. The thugs are shot dead and the family heads off to establish a Survivalist stronghold in the mountains. Directed by Milland himself the film's message is that if you survive World War 3 shoot first and ask questions later: which is exactly the sort of attitude likely to cause World War 3.

Britain contributed *The Day the Earth Caught Fire* to the bomb genre in 1961. Directed and written by Val Guest it had an *On the Beach* sense of reality in its destruction of a London growing increasingly hotter after atomic tests have pushed the Earth out of its orbit towards the sun.

Another British contribution was *The Damned*, though directed by American Joseph Losey. It's a pretentious story about a group of children being used as guinea pigs by scientists trying to create a

race of humans capable of withstanding radiation and therefore be able to survive an atomic war. The film takes a long time to arrive at this revelation, being padded out along the way with too much Oliver Reed and his inconsequential activities (and just a little of Oliver Reed goes a long way). The bleak ending is memorable but overall it's a bit of a bore.

Back in 1959 Ian Fleming, Kevin McClory and Jack Whittingham devised a plot about the hi-jacking of two H-Bombs for what was supposed to be the first James Bond movie, *Thunderball*. As everyone knows *Thunderball* got shelved for various legal reasons and *Dr No* was the first of the Bond films. There are no H-Bombs in *Dr No* but there is an atomic reactor in the villain's stronghold which blows up at the end of the film. Dr No himself (in the film at least) symbolises science's uneasy relationship with atomic power – he is arrogantly confident that he can control it even though radiation poisoning has cost him his hands.

The half-German Dr No obviously provided Stanley Kubrick with part of the inspiration for the title character in *Dr Strangelove Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*. But though Peter Sellers' mad doctor has a Dr No-like mechanical hand, which has a life of its own, and has been similarly poisoned by his close association with radioactive material, Strangelove was also inspired by the real-life German scientist Werner von Braun (Strangelove also bears an uncanny resemblance to Henry Kissinger but that must be a pure coincidence as the film was made years before Dr K became a public figure). Von Braun had been instrumental in the development of the V2 rocket that did so much damage to London but at the end of the war he quickly offered his services to the Americans. He subsequently became very important to the USA's

space programme and in 1960 an awful movie was made about his life, starring Curt Jurgens, called *I Aim at the Stars* (someone suggested a better title would have been *I Aim at the Stars – But Hit London*).

Dr Strangelove remains the best of the anti-Bomb movies. Kubrick's black comedy suggests that the 3rd World War won't come about because of any deliberate hostile act by either side but because of a series of human and mechanical errors – a theme that has become even more relevant with the increasing reliance on complicated technology prone to break-downs and computer malfunctions (and it is, of course, the theme of *Badham's War Games*).

Fail Safe, also made in 1963, had a similar theme but was much less effective. A "serious" version of *Dr Strangelove*, it's about what happens when an American bomber accidentally obliterates Moscow. To placate the understandably miffed Russians the American President orders that an H-Bomb be dropped on New York. The air force general who, reluctantly, does the deed gets a Medal of Honor. Yes, I know it sounds even more absurd than Kubrick's satire but unfortunately it's all done with a straight face. A real bomb of a movie.

One of the few films to try and show what it would be like during and immediately after an atomic attack was Peter Watkins' *The War Game* (1965). Though crudely made on a tiny budget it is full of harrowing images – so harrowing, in fact, that the film was refused a showing on BBC TV even though it was BBC production. 'It might disturb audiences' said a BBC spokesman at the time, which is ironic seeing as that is what it was supposed to do. It did get a theatrical release, however, and attracted a deal of critical praise.

But *The War Game* marked the end of these serious

Bomb movie for some time. More typical of the cinema's approach to the Bomb in the latter half of the 1960s was *Thunderball*. In it SPECTRE almost blows up Miami with an H-Bomb it's hi-jacked from NATO but the Bomb itself is treated in a way that undermines its true menace – it has become nothing but another technological toy within the movie's huge arsenal of such toys. By *Thunderball* the makers of the series had made it impossible to take anything in a Bond film seriously and that included the H-Bomb itself.

Even the prospect of atomic war itself was similarly diminished and diluted in a later Bond movie *You Only Live Twice* when SPECTRE, apparently on behalf of the Red Chinese, tries to provoke nuclear hostilities between the USA and the USSR. And it was the same in the virtual remake of that film in 1977, *The Spy Who Loved Me*. Despite all the grim paraphernalia of atomic war featured in the film – the nuclear submarines, the missiles, the nuclear warheads – the real threat is not there. The end of the world has been reduced to a colourful plot device in an escapist fantasy.

Atomic war was nothing but a gimmick too in *Planet of the Apes* (1968) when it was used to provide a predictable *frisson* at the film's climax when the astronaut (Charlton Heston) discovers the remains of the Statue of Liberty and realizes he's been on Earth all the time (surely the fact that the apes speak English should have provided him with a clue).

The Bomb theme was more cynically exploited in the sequel *Beneath the Planet of the Apes* (1970). The hero is captured by mutants who live in the ruins of a New York destroyed in an atomic war 2,000 years in the past. In their subterranean church the mutants worship a live nuclear warhead – the Domsday Bomb – and chant: "Glory be to the



This spread: Three scenes from the tele drama, *The Day After*. The picture above shows the main street of Lawrence, Kansas, after the massive nuclear attack on Kansas City, thirty-six miles away.

Bomb and the Holy Fall-Out: As it was in the beginning and always shall be . . . " And sing: "All things bright and beautiful, the Lord Bomb made us all." In a surprisingly downbeat ending the bomb actually goes off in the film's climax, destroying the entire world. Despite this it was a big financial success and the scriptwriters were obliged to resurrect the earth for subsequent Ape movies . . .

Definitely not a success was Richard Lester's nuclear black comedy *The Bed Sitting Room* in 1969. Based awkwardly on a Spike Milligan play the goonishness sits uncomfortably with the bleak reality of the post-war settings, like the shattered dome of St Paul's protruding from a swamp, the line of wrecked cars in a permanent traffic jam, the grim expanses of landscape dominated by piles of sludge and heaps of discarded boots, broken plates and false teeth. "The real awful thing," said Lester, "is that we were able to film most of those things in England without faking it. All that garbage is real . . ."

The Bomb movie was a vanished breed during the 1970s though one of the few exceptions was

Damnation Alley in 1979. It's a terrible film (it's a shame the makers didn't stick to Roger Zelazny's novel – they would have had something like *Mad Max 2*) but it does have one memorable sequence. This is at the beginning when the nuclear war is in progress: the air force men in their underground bunker watch the cities of America disappearing one by one on a large illuminated map with a matter-of-fact calmness which is quite disturbing . . .

Now that the Bomb is back in the public consciousness it's interesting, and significant, that the latest Broccoli Bond attempts a more realistic approach to the Bomb. Instead of the possible end of the world the atomic threat in *Octopussy* is in the form of a single bomb hidden in an American air force base. As I said in my review (*Starburst 61*) *Octopussy* actually contains a serious political message for a change but because the rest of the movie is as silly as usual (no, more so than usual!) it's doubtful that audiences will be aware of it.

The same will probably apply to the message in the remake of *Thunderball*; *Never Say Never Again*.

Its director, Irvin Kershner, rightfully feels the film's theme is more topical than ever but seems to think his movie will influence people in this area. "New bombs and nuclear weapons are being manufactured every day. No government can take the responsibility of controlling such a massive arsenal; sooner or later a weapon is going to get into the wrong hands," he said.

But German actor Klaus Maria Brandauer, who plays Largo (the old Adolfo Celi role) said, "It would be great if it did but somehow I doubt that our film will suddenly make people realise the danger any more than would, for instance, the real facts or pictures of Hiroshima . . ."

Brandauer, unfortunately, is right. The anti-Bomb movie has been with us for over 30 years now but we've still got the Bomb. And though a whole new flock of Bomb movies is coming our way it's unlikely any of them will make the slightest difference to the situation. Even films like *The Day After*.

Pessimistic, I know, but that's what comes of watching Bomb movies.

Still, it's better than watching the real thing.





DREAMSCAPE

Preview by Tony Crawley





Forget the galaxies. Forget Max's mad wastelands of debris. And behold the new frontier. Dreams. Your dreams and mine. Nightmares, too, come to that.

We love dreams or hate them. But we can't help having 'em. (Indeed, I've heard the view that we'd die without them.) But then what? Do we simply forget them, have our conscious wipe the unconscious from our minds – or make the odd trillion out of them like Steve King, by turning them into books?

What we can't really do with dreams is share them. You have yours. I have mine. I don't actually, but that's beside the point (and makes rubbish of the theory that we die without 'em). We can talk about them but I can't show you mine even if you think you can show me yours, so there!

What, then, if we could enter dreams. Each other's. What then? Could we control them? Change them around? Cast them, even, like movies? Use them for good... or for ill?

Such is the basis of former cheapie exploitation director Joe Ruben's first leap into the fantasy genre. *Dreamscape*. The budget, considering the effects involved, is low (\$6 million). Expectations run high, though. Indeed, on paper, *Dreamscape* reads like the most novel, innovative slice of sf to come down the pike since Raquel Welch was miniaturised and injected into the blood stream of the dying

politico in *Fantastic Voyage* close on twenty years ago.

If the budget is low, and the director's background far from hopeful (anyone see *The Pam Pam Girls?*), the latter has used the former wisely. Some, apparently, a-mazing effects have been toolled up by Peter Kuran, Richard Taylor and Craig Reardon. Between them, they've toiled on most of the biggies of recent years. Count 'em: *Star Wars*, *Empire Strikes Back*, *Conan*, *The Thing*, *Star Trek II*, *Looker*, *Tron* (so not everything turns out a winner) and *Poltergeist*.

Add to that bundle of talent, British camerace Brian Tufano, music by double Oscar-winner Maurice Jarre (Jean-Michel's papa) and editing in Richard Halsey's safe hands, safe enough to net him an Oscar for *Rocky*.

The cast ain't half bad, either. Dennis Quaid, direct from *Jaws 3-D*, and playing NASA astronaut Gordon Cooper in *The Right Stuff* (when you're hot you're hot, or your agent is); Max Von Sydow, so often in our genre these days, from *The Exorcist* to *Dune*, and *Never Say Never Again* en route, that one almost forgets he used to be in everything Ingmar Bergman made; Christopher Plummer as the smooth, and most likely CIA nasty; and Eddie Albert, celebrating his 75th birthday during the shooting as the American President. There's also *The Warriors'* David Patrick Kelley as a psychic hitman (it'll make sense later) and although she wasn't that well known

when playing the Von Sydow aide, falling, natch, for Quaid, Kate Capshaw has since sprung from *Dreamscape* to a dream deal. She's Indy Jones' new tough lady sidekick in *The Temple of Doom*.

As always, on paper, not at all bad...

In a serious version of the role he has in the *SCTV* comedy teams *Strange Brew*, Max von Sydow is the scientist behind the dreamlink machine which allows psychics to project into the dreams of another people. Max has high hopes for it; on a therapeutic level. Dennis Quaid goes to work for him, after running into trouble with bookies when his 'gift' picks too many racetrack winners. His arrival at the Thornhill College project does not please David Patrick Kelley, until now the good prof's star telepath... Trouble's in store!

As we know from way back in films and tv-sf, when such a breakthrough machine like this one is made, the smooth-spoken, twisted baddies from the upper echelons of government cannot be far behind. Enter: Chris Plummer, a good friend of the President and preparing to bring the Prez to Thornhill for certain tests. The old man of the White House has the dreams that the film's stuff is made of. He keeps nightmareing his way through a post-nuke holocaust and just knows it's prophetic unless he rushes off to Geneva and initiates a disarmament deal with Moscow, fast.

Young Quaid, who's better at dream-linking than Kelley, picks up on a few doubts about the programme. Maybe it's not all about "dream clarification" but a method to enter minds and steal secrets. Or then again – steal lives. Murder! Kelly certainly puts a woman patient away in one test – with a "dream knife". The old lady's heart couldn't take that shock and she snuffs it. The old wives' tale is true, comments Plummer. "When you dream that you die, you die in life at the same instant."

Oh really?

And so is Plummer really checking into the use of dreamlinking as the ultimate, the perfect assassination tool? With President Eddie Albert as his target?

You bet you! Uri Geller he is...!

The psychics enter a whole bunch of varied dreams via a multi-hued tunnel affair, computerised by Pete Kuran's Visual Concepts Engineering firm and Richard Taylor's MAGI combine in Santa Monica. As for the third effects man, Craig Reardon's act is prosthetics and he's come up with a character known as Snake Man. Think on...

As Quaid tries to warn Von Sydow, not to mention the Prez, Plummer's men are after him. And Kate. But the real climax of the piece is not in reality – but dreams. As Quaid tackles Kelley within the debris of the President's apocalyptic wasteland nightmare.

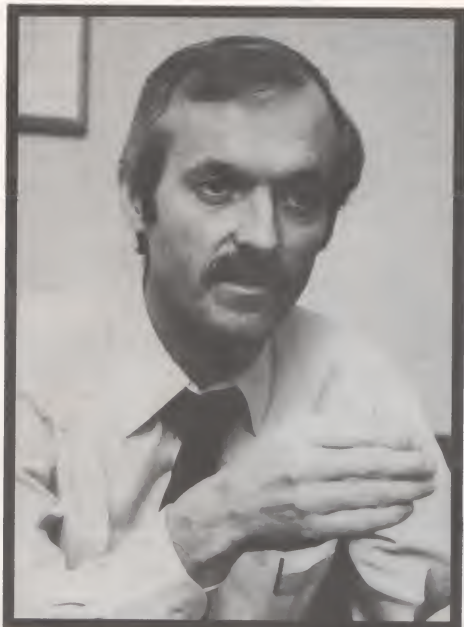
Hmm, yeah, well I await the results with interest. There would seem to be plenty of scope in *Dreamscape*.





Animator Don Bluth re-defines the Video Arcade Game





Feature by Francesca Landau & Phil Edwards

In 1982, arcade video games made three times as much money as the entire film industry, so it's not surprising that all the major studios have included a video game subsidiary within their home video departments.

With the popularity of games like *Superman 3*, *War Games*, *Tron*, *Pac-Man*, *Donkey Kong* and *Frogger* (the latter three conversely inspiring their own animated TV series) a major consideration with any new science fiction/fantasy project is whether or not it is suitable material for a video game—footage to be used in both the movie and the video game tie-in would have to be planned at pre-production stage. Until recently, most such games consisted of a few dots and sticks chasing other dots and sticks, a very limited number of sets (the vid-industry's term for the backgrounds used in games) and plenty of player imagination. Perhaps this accounts for the recent fall-off in video arcade business—reported to be as much as 40%.

But now there is something new in the way of video games—something which is revolutionising not only the arcade business, but might also have long-term effects on movies and the way we watch them. Due to a combination of high-resolution laser disc technology, live action footage and animation, it is now possible to not only play

a game but to participate in it and, to a point, direct the action on the video screen.

In May 1983, an arcade in San Diego, California, previewed a laser disc game, *Astron Belt*, developed by a Japanese firm, in which a computer generated spaceship flies through space backgrounds that were originally shot as live-action special effects on film. *Astron Belt* has already proved itself a major success in Japan and Europe, despite the higher cost of 50 cents (about 40p) a play.

Now comes *Dragon's Lair*, the very first player-interactive, animated "mini-movie game", designed by Rick Dyer, the founder of Advanced Microcomputer Systems. Animated by Don Bluth Productions, its popularity and the potential it represents is, in great part, responsible for pulling the arcade industry out of its decline. And not only the arcade industry. Bluth, an ex-Disney animator and director of the acclaimed *Secret of NIMH*, recalls, "Right after NIMH, our union went into a strike, people were out on the streets and couldn't work. The people that were going to back our second picture just pulled right away and said they couldn't afford more money. The game came along at just the right moment, and it looked financially promising. We had some new investors that stepped up because games looked more lucrative than features. We feel that *Dragon's Lair* provides several advantages that video games previously haven't furnished. Because of the human ►



Facing page. Two scenes from *Dragon's Lair* featuring Dirk the Daring and Princess Daphne. Top left: Don Bluth, animation producer on *Dragon's Lair* and director of the acclaimed *Secret of NIMH*. Above: The detailed special effects animation and colour matching work that goes into creating *Dragon's Lair*. Below: The game as found in your local arcade.





Above: Dirk the Daring lifts his flaming sword in this scene from *Dragon's Lair*. Below: A shocking experience for the brave knight in the hot seat.



shapes and the elaborate full artwork, the game is easier to watch for extended periods of time. The three-dimensional drawings, the conflicts and threats seem closer to actual human experience. In these ways the computer ends up giving more back to the human."

Dragon's Lair combines full animation and computer technology to create a very definite storyline. Dirk the Daring (the player is Dirk) battles all manner of horrific threats to save Princess Daphne, held captive by the Evil Dragon in the *Dragon's Lair*. His success depends on the skill of the player and the choices he makes as he sends Dirk through a variety of rooms, each containing their own cleverly devised peril. As Gary Goldman, Bluth's animation director, explains, "We decided on a certain game format which, we felt, was from very easy to very difficult. As we began programming, we realised players may have a high memory situation, so we made the sequence random-based. You only have to get through 18 of 42 rooms to win, but those will constantly rotate so the game won't become boring."

Among some of the hazards that Dirk encounters as he battles his way from room to room are The Robot Knight, The Flaming Sword, The Flying Barding (a magical suit of horse armour), The Giant Chicken Foot, Acid Creatures, Mud Men, Geysers, Bats, Skulls and Slime and finally, the Dragon – should the player be that skilled.

The game has proved such a runaway hit that not only have arcade owners found it necessary to install additional monitor screens for bystanders to watch other people play, but Hannah-Barbera, Marvel Productions Ltd and the Ruby-Spears animation house are considering a Saturday morning TV series based on the adventures of Dirk and the characters from *Dragon's Lair*.

The animation for the game was carried out at the Bluth Studios after receiving the game design from Advanced Microcomputers. Over four months, thirteen animators produced 50,000 drawings for a total of 27 minutes of full animation on a \$1.1 million budget. Special effects, like crumbling walls, deadly vapours and raging fire were later added to signal to the player an immediate danger. Music (by Cris Stone) and dialogue were added in stereo to enhance the atmosphere of playing a movie rather than a game. Finally, the entire film was transferred onto high resolution laser disc for use in the game itself.

Thus far, an estimated 3500 games have been sold at \$4000 each (although replacement discs and programmes only cost the arcade owners approximately \$1000) putting the game's gross to date at \$14 million. Bluth expects to sell 100,000 games making a total of \$400 million. A home version will be on the market after *Dragon's Lair* has had its run in arcades and will use a laser disc attachment that will retain the same picture quality and operation as the arcade version.

The Bluth Studios now have three more games in development at a budget of over \$1.5 million – a science fiction game called *Space Ace*, a time travel game, *Time Warp* and just like in the movies, a sequel to *Dragon's Lair*.

Could this be the beginning of viewer participation and manipulation in motion pictures? Don Bluth, who sees *Dragon's Lair* as something of The Jazz Singer of the 80s, thinks so, "It's a matter of memory. When you can get the laser disc to store enough memory, then you can make infinite possibilities."

(Special thanks to Randy Lofficier and Don Bluth Productions.)

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THEM!

Feature by Phil Edwards



The 1950s spawned a whole hoard of creepy crawley monsters. Planet Earth was menaced by giant scorpions, cockroaches, praying mantis, spiders, octopus, crabs and many other many-legged beasts. Most of these creatures peopled (monstered? low budget B movies which the studios churned out to satisfy the burgeoning teenage movie market. Some were good films, rising above their budgetary limitations to provide fast-paced and often suspenseful entertainment. Others were plain bad—though the passage of time has invested many of them with a sociological significance far beyond their makers' intentions. Along with Jack Arnold's *Tarantula*, perhaps the best film of the Giant Monster sub-genre is the Warner Brothers production of *Them!*

The story of *Them!* opens in the New Mexico desert. A police scout plane is searching the area for a missing caravan. On the ground, a Highway Patrol car is doing the same. A little girl, deep in shock, is found wandering among the cacti and Joshua trees. The two police officers who find her also discover the missing trailer but there is no sign of its other occupants. Even more mysteriously, the side of the mobile home is smashed open from the inside. Nothing appears to have been taken, although a bag of sugar is ripped open and is found to be crawling with ants. An ambulance arrives to take the child to hospital and when smelling salts are waved under her nose in an attempt to bring her out of her shocked state, she suddenly screams, "Them!" and then relapses into her catatonic trauma.

The two patrolmen then drive to an isolated general store to make further enquiries. Arriving at dusk, they find the store all but demolished. Again, nothing appears to be missing but they find several

sugar sacks torn apart and crawling with ants. At the bottom of a basement stair the owner is found—dead, brutally mutilated.

One of the officers, Ben Peterson (James Whitmore) leaves his partner at the shop while he goes to check in with headquarters. Within minutes of his departure, his partner hears a strange, unearthly sound in the desert night. He goes outside to investigate—the sound intensifies, he looks up and screams in terror.

With this atmospheric sequence, director Gordon Douglas opened the film which started the giant bug cycle of the 50s. Nearly thirty years after its release, *Them!* retains the ability to work up a level of suspense quite unique in the menagerie of monster movies of the decade.

The idea for a film about giant ants was the brainchild of George Worthing Yates. He would later write several science fiction films, most notably Ray Harryhausen's perversely anarchic *Earth vs The*



Top: The US army takes aim at the ensuing attack by monstrous (mut)ants. Above: Professor Madford (Edmund Gwenn) points out the current housing shortage in America's massive ant community.

Flying Saucers. The writer submitted his story to Warner Brothers and the scenario went the rounds of various producers at the Burbank studio. It was picked up by Ted Sherdeman who was looking for a property which dealt with the dangers of atomic testing, a popular subject and talking point of the day. In 1953, little was known of the long-term effects of open atomic testing and, in *Them!*, Sherdeman saw a story which would enable him to exploit the possible and unknown dangers of The Bomb. The result of testing in the New Mexico desert – primarily the White Plains area where the original experiments had taken place – was to be the discovery of a breed of carnivorous ants, mutated to gigantic proportions.

Yates' original script had been in the form of a diary and told of the ants, which in that version, had lived in the subway system under New York. Sherdeman felt that by transposing the story to the desert location, a more atmospheric and frightening film could be produced. Yates was hired by Warners to develop his screenplay and the writer was paid \$25,000 for ten weeks work. But as the script was being written, it became obvious that Yates' treatment would be unfilmable – from a budgetary point of view.

When Yates' contracted period was up, Sherdeman turned the script over to Russell Hughes, an in-house Warners writer. Hughes was enthusiastic about the project but, sadly, after completing only twenty pages the writer died and Sherdeman finished the screenplay himself.

Much of the strength of *Them!* rests with Hughes and Sherdeman's script. Rather than turn out a run-of-the-mill monster movie, the screenplay was developed in three parts. The first section, set in the desert, is written in the form of a mystery. Nothing is seen of the ants for the first third of the film. Clues are built up through the intriguing evidence found by Peterson – the waif-like child wandering alone, so shocked by what she has seen that she can only scream "Them!" when a bottle of formic acid is waved under her nose; the strange noises heard in the vicinity of the attacks; the odd footprints found in the sands; the sugar sacks, ripped apart and crawling with ants and finally the general store owner whose mutilated body is found to be pumped full of formic acid.

The second and third parts of the feature are more standard, though still exciting fare. Once the culprits are identified and their desert nest located, they are driven underground by the heat of napalm and then gassed. When the nest is explored, in a chillingly creepy sequence, it is discovered that a queen ant and her mate have escaped. It then becomes a race against time to discover their new location before they have time to breed and a national panic sets in.

The grand-slam finale takes place in the storm drains under Los Angeles, with Peterson, who has by this time a sidekick in the shape of an FBI agent played by James Arness, desperately trying to rescue two small boys who are trapped in the queen's nest, before the army move in to incinerate the monsters.

There are some interesting diversions and subsidiary characters along the way – Edmund Gwenn as a feisty scientist who occasionally wears a Prophet of Doom cap quite well; his equally feisty scientist daughter played by Joan Weldon and there's an amusing cameo by Fess Parker as an alcoholic who reports seeing a giant flying ant and is not only believed, but is restrained in a mental hospital to keep the truth secret.

It was Sherdeman's plan to film *Them!* in colour and the exciting new 3D process with which Warners had such a hit with *House of Wax*. But ►



Top: Professor Medford arrives on the scene to add his expertise in things entomological to the search for Them! Above: The Professor indicates a (giant) footprint, much to the disbelief of a typical 50s B-movie cop (complete with nesto-leserpect). Below: Medford comforts his daughter as they wait for the ants to emerge from the Los Angeles storm drains.





studio head, Jack Warner, was not enthusiastic about the project. In an effort to win over the movie mogul, Sherdeman arranged a screening of some nature footage of real ants. Unimpressed, Warner walked out after only a few minutes. Undeterred, Sherdeman had the prop department construct an outside model ant and showed it to Steve Trilling, Jack Warner's personal assistant. Trilling had some test footage shot of the model but Jack Warner remained unmoved and even tried to sell *Them!* to 20th Century-Fox.

Walter McCuhan, another Warner executive, stepped in after reading the script and, to Sherdeman's relief, *Them!* became a reality. Gordon Douglas, a Hollywood veteran who had started his movie career directing *Our Gang* comedy shorts in the mid-30s, was selected to helm the project. He immediately went to work with Dick Smith (not the make-up maestro) of the Warner Brothers special effects department, designing the ants.

One ant was built as a complete full-size

mechanical model, operated through a system of hydraulics and levers. Another was constructed, though it finished at the halfway mark on the body. The rear was fitted with a boom to facilitate mobility for close-ups of the head lurching into view. Certain shots required up to twenty people to operate the full size mechanical and it is a tribute to Douglas' careful shooting and editing that the sparsity of creatures is never noticable. Several other ants were also built full size, though they lacked any mechanical abilities. Their heads were connected to the bodies on a loose joint system which allowed wind machines to give them a semblance of movement and life.

However production on *Them!* was not to run smoothly. Following pre-production and only two days from shooting in the Mojave Desert, the film's budget was cut drastically. Gone was the colour and 3D and the schedule was shortened. Gordon Douglas finally brought the film in for a final cost of under \$1 million.

Warner Brothers veiled the shooting of *Them!* in

secrecy, and even the initial advertising campaigns didn't reveal that the monsters of the movie were giant ants. The original British poster for the film only has the title, for example. This low-key approach proved successful and *Them!* turned out to be the studio's biggest grossing movie of its year. Along with popular approval the film also garnered some good reviews—"A topnotch science fiction shocker," *Variety*; "A well-built example of the neo-monstrous," *Monthly Film Bulletin*; "One of the scariest pictures to hit the screen in years," *Hollywood Reporter* and so on.

Them! started a trend in big bug movies and, as Bill Warren points out in his book, *Keep Watching the Skies*, it would perhaps be better remembered and thought of it were not for the rash of poorer imitations that followed. Even as late as 1972, the basic plot formula was being used in such films as *Night of the Lepus* and much of the imagery seen in the storm drain scenes in 1982's *Alligator* is derived from Gordon Douglas' 1954 classic. But as always, the original is still the best.



Top left: The police department study a plaster cast of the grotesque footprint found at the scene of a brutal murder committed by Them! Far left: The team formulates an idea (note the lightbulb!) on how to stop the monster ants. Left: Professor Medford and Co prepare to incinerate the ants in their underground hideout. Above: The film's heroes endeavour to take a snapshot of the enlarged insects . . . Below: In this publicity shot for Them! the size of the ants was somewhat exaggerated.



Big Meat Eater is a bad movie – and that's official! Chris Windsor told me so and he should know because it was he who directed the wackiest and weirdest film to appear on your screens in years. "It may seem easy to make a bad movie but it isn't. I tried for a controlled badness in *Big Meat Eater* and what I am always afraid of is that people will look at it and say, 'Well anyone can make a bad film,' and this is going to sound utterly ridiculous but it really is hard to make a bad movie well. That's why I like one of the reviews that appeared in Canada when the film was shown at the Toronto Film Festival. The headline read, '*Big Meat Eater* illustrates how good bad can be,' which is interesting to me as I insisted the actors take the film absolutely seriously and I would constantly remind them that no one in the film is supposed to know it's funny."

Windsor is 34 years old and in his own words, fading fast! He was brought up in South London and moved to Canada in 1971 to take a university degree in English Literature. "But I didn't like it and as the university had a good film workshop, I threw myself into that instead. I then went freelance and joined an educational television company in Alberta and after a stint working in public relations, I went back to television and did the movie. That's a very compressed biography of what in reality is ten years of sweat".

Made at the end of 1980, *Big Meat Eater* was Windsor and producer Lawrence Keane's reaction to what was being financed in Canada at the time. "It was all lousy imitations of American movies which subsequently have never sold in any other territories. We made *Big Meat Eater* to break the widely-held theory that you couldn't make a low budget movie and make money especially if it contained just Canadian actors. We have focused attention on that and I certainly feel more optimistic for the future. I would like Canada to do the equivalent of Australian movies because it is the only way that makes sense both in North America and here in England."

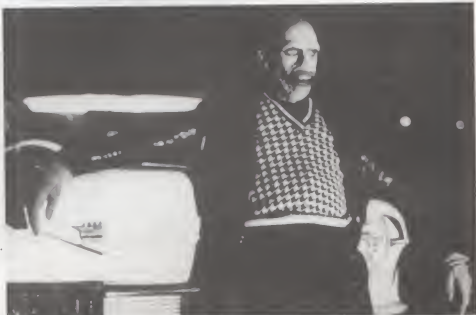
Big Meat Eater was written originally in 1974 by Windsor and Keane but as they couldn't get the adequate funding, they moved on to other projects. Then in 1980 they formed a company and hired Phil Savath to rewrite the screenplay. "The money was eventually raised in a co-financed deal with a bank and some private investors who needed a tax shelter. What that means is an individual puts up x amount of dollars and can claim up to five times that amount in tax write-off. In 1980 you could still do that and the equivalent in sterling we raised was about £75,000. At the time though we told people it cost \$250,000, as if that really made it sound any better. People still don't believe how little money we made *Big Meat Eater* for. We worked on the gloss and to me it looks a million dollars. Everyone had to give at least 110% while making the movie – and it shows. I believe that if you give the actors and technicians the opportunity to contribute, that is exactly what they want".

If *Big Meat Eater* is influenced in any way by another film-maker, its style owes a lot to Roger Corman, says Windsor. "I have a great admiration for Corman but that doesn't mean I want to sit through all his movies. I do like what he's done, though, and I feel the way we satirise things in the film is somewhat along the Corman guidelines in *The Little Shop of Horrors*. Most directors trying to make an independent film tend to go for a big artistic statement but my interest has always been in the Corman school of thought which leads you to that eventual end."

BIG MEAT EATER

Feature by Alan Jones

Windsor likes to refer to *Big Meat Eater* as "a bizarre musical comedy. We designed it so audience could have a laugh and what is happening in Vancouver is that repeat audiences have started to go along and sing the opening song. It is all totally spontaneous and that's the audience I want, not the blood and guts one even though there are some elements of that in the film. I think the film will have a broader appeal if it is marketed that way and not on the horror angle. Originally the film had a different title and it was just a comedy with horror elements. When we reckoned a totally insane project had just as much chance of succeeding as anything else, we added some songs and a few lyrics. Our composer Doug Dodd then introduced us to David Peterson who had already written '*Big Meat Eater*' totally separately along with '*Heat Seeking Missile*'. So when we incorporated those into the screenplay, we picked a song title for the name of the movie



Above: A Creature-from-the-Black-Lagoon-lookalike from *Big Meat Eater*. Opposite page: Populating Chris Windsor's weird film are such characters as boy genius Jan Wczinski (Andrew Gillies), 'Butcher' Bob Sanderson (George Dawson, seen here stepping out in Burqutlism), and Abdulla (Big Miller). Below: The title star of *Big Meat Eater*.



and *Big Meat Eater* seemed the most obvious choice. Doing a musical on our budget was ludicrous, really. The actors lip-synched to a rough-mix playback and then it was tidied up in a studio. It was a miracle it all worked out. I would love the opening song, 'Bob's Theme', to be released as a single here and possibly an album, although we didn't achieve that in Canada."

The location for *Big Meat Eater* was White Rock, a small town just outside Vancouver, where Windsor and his crew found an old house with a shop annexed scheduled for demolition. "All the interiors and exteriors were filmed there and it was a great bonus as we didn't have to pay for anything. The film was made in 30 days, and that included all the model shots, and because we were all working for such low wages, I made sure we only put in a ten-hour day. Most low budget films aim for about 16 hours a day but I wanted everyone's co-operation so I

deliberately set out not to exhaust them. Nobody got paid the full rate on the film. It was all made for deferred fees and, if the film makes a profit, a small share of the action. On paper of course it has already made a profit as it has been sold, not only to the United Kingdom, but also Germany and the United States where it will be distributed by New Line who are familiar with the handling of such films, as they proved with John Water's output. At one stage we did have a bid from United Artists but we figured the film would tend to get lost and not be nurtured along. Our agents are waiting for the returns from the American release to see if it increases our value in other markets, but as it stands, by 1986 we should have made our money back because of a sale to Canadian Pay TV."

At first Windsor was terrified that he wouldn't be able to get away with what critics now say he did in the film. "We pushed everything over the limit. I was afraid at one

point that I would actually get lynched! But the model shots, for example, were fun to do and I think the audience picks up on that. Let's face it, the spaceship swinging about is just ludicrous! We had \$150,000 to do the whole film and these days that is often just the cost of one effects shot in a big budget movie. So as we couldn't compete with that we went in the completely opposite direction and sent the shots up. Audiences know they are being tricked but, as they are in on the joke, they like it. I certainly didn't go and see *Plan 9 from Outer Space* for inspiration—I did it semiconsciously because everyone has seen tacky movies and has that collective to draw upon. The profoundest thing anyone has said about *Big Meat Eater* is that it was a one joke movie. That is exactly the point, so it is really gratifying to know that audiences have gone along with it. We push our luck so much with something like the sub-title 'The mutation weers off'. Not only that, we pull the same ▶





Above: The publicity art for Chris Windsor's highly unusual film. Opposite: A colourful selection of weird scenes from *Big Meat Eater*.

stunt twice! Every screening is a nightmare for me as I'm on edge wondering if people are going to buy it or not. And with amazement they always seem to. *Big Meat Eater* is unashamed and has no pretensions. Most movies are pretending to be something they aren't and mine isn't. It's made for laughs as pure entertainment with some good music and intentional terrible things which is there for fun."

Big Miller, who stars as Abdullah in the film, turns out to be a well-respected serious jazz musician who lives in Alberta. "A friend of mine was making a documentary on him and made a passing suggestion that he would be perfect for our villain. And the moment he said that, I knew we had to have him. When he read the script he was interested and strangely enough seemed to have a vast understanding of the character. It was his idea that Abdullah should have as little dialogue as possible and of course he was absolutely right. As you have pointed out it is a shame that he seems to vanish half-way through the picture, but we were very well aware of that. The film had to be made by a certain date which made it impossible to iron out the problems with the script. In a perfect world I would have liked more time to revise it

and bring the script into sharper focus. It is a big flaw in the film but it doesn't seem to have stopped people's enjoyment of it."

Another actor, Andrew Gillies who plays Jan Wezinski, had a few moments of doubt as to the sanity of the director. "I asked him to play the part with a really upfront English accent and he in turn asked me if I knew what I was doing? I had to answer no, I didn't, but that it seemed the right course to take. It does strike people and, in one instant, let's them know it's a joke. It makes as much sense as anything else in the film!"

Seeing the film now, Windsor admits that *Big Meat Eater* could probably have used a touch more gore. "At the time I was trying to keep the film on a particular course, even though it may not look that way, and that was a borderline between a horror and a comedy. I was trying to stay right on a razor's edge and not veer off into any clearly defined direction. The point was that it had all the ingredients of being a straight horror film but that wasn't what I wanted. Now people are trying to put it in *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* category but that was once in a lifetime phenomenon and our film is completely different. I think *Big Meat Eater* is more like *Eraserhead* in terms of its potential success which means a small but





loyal following. The purpose of the film was to provide an opportunity for people to make complete idiots of themselves, and I don't think that's a bad purpose at all."

Now with *Big Meat Eater* on the first rungs of potential success, Chris Windsor has a number of projects in the pipeline that will hopefully lead him to a future where he will actually get paid for making a movie, or at least get more than the caterer usually does. "At present I have an idea with Channel 4 about my life in the '60s as a student which will feature lots of music. I also have a script concerning an Indian chief who signed a treaty and, to put it bluntly, got screwed. What seems the most hopeful at the moment is a road movie set in Arizona called *The Bounty Hunter*."

And if his persistence with *Big Meat Eater* is anything to go by, it looks like we will be seeing a lot more of this truly quirky director. "The main idea behind *Big Meat Eater* was, that no matter what, we would get it in front of an audience somehow, regardless of the critics if they loathed it. The surprise was that they didn't, so it hasn't been as difficult as we expected. We wanted it to reach its target and the response was better than we dared hope. And honestly, I couldn't be more pleased."

Starburst Review Section

LIQUID SKY

"Dirty, funny, perverse, crazy – and pretentious."

**A Starburst Film Review
by Alan Jones**

Liquid Sky is dirty, funny, perverse, crazy, punk rock, fashion conscious – and hopelessly pretentious. Independent Soviet filmmaker Slava Tsukerman is having us all on in a gorgeously photographed, over-long look into the sordid and fascinating side of New York's chic drug culture.

Co-written by Anne Carlisle, an actress who plays both androgynous male and female leads here, it is supposedly based on a true-life past experience. It makes you wonder what she's been smoking recently?

An alien spacecraft lands on top of a Manhattan skyscraper and its gelatinous inhabitant searches for a substitute to the powdered and sexual thrills that the earthy characters indulge in ad nauseum in their rarified, glitterati-ridden landscape. And indeed it gets hooked on vaporising Carlisle's amours at the height of their passion. She in turn cottons on to all of this preposterousness and uses the alien as a method to get rid of all her enemies and the drug-addicts and hustlers she can't stand. Until of

course it comes to the time when the piper must be paid...

Liquid Sky images and dialogue are visual and verbal assaults that I can only recommend to the most hardened among you mainly because the film's unusual impact says more about the fantasies of the art house audiences it is aimed at than it does about the film itself. It really is over-indulgent and stylistically over the top to a distracting degree on every level.

As a fashion/attitude extravaganza Liquid Sky just about passes muster but as a science-fiction movie its rather obscure message is too grandiose to take as anything but a huge joke. And the soundtrack is a poseur's delight too!



Left: The colourful publicity artwork for the arguably hip Slava Tsukerman film. **Above:** The reflected 'image' of Anne Carlisle as Jimmy (she also plays the female lead, Meroaret, and co-wrote the script of Liquid Sky).

PIECES

"The gore is sleazy and very fake."

**A Starburst Film Review
by Alan Jones**

A chainsaw wielding psycho fashions a human jigsaw out of various nubile Bostonian student bodies in this wretched Spanish/Italian import. The opening flashback reveals it all has something to do with a childhood trauma when his mother found him breathing heavily over a puzzle of a nude centrefold model.

Pieces (originally titled 1000 cries has the night), has a minuscule amount of eccentricity going for it, but it's not enough to make it anything less than an

odeal to sit through. It makes no real sense at all mainly because everyone involved defies the thin line of reality it could have easily maintained. Instead Pieces offers an incredulous amount of over-stated direction and dubbed disembodied dialogue laid on with a trowel as the actors overplay every obvious stereotype in the book. The best example of this is Paul Smith (Bluto in Altman's Popeye) who mugs hysterically as one of the supposedly menacing red herrings.

How can anyone take a film seriously that shows the maniac getting into an elevator while trying to hide a huge chainsaw behind his back out of sight from his intended victim? Pieces makes us fall apart with instances like that occurring all the time. Whether in absurd actions – like the murder on the waterbed where both actors are trying to conceal how an upcoming gore-effect works, or the priceless lines of dialogue: "Tell me doctor, could this se-

vered body here have been caused by that chainsaw lying over there?"

The gore is sleazy and very fake – admittedly not without some shock value – the most depressingly sordid effect being saved for the final twist ending that just goes to show how contemptuous of the audience the filmmakers really are.

Quite how Christopher George, wife Linda Day and especially Edmund Purdom got mixed up in this dubious melange is beyond me. I only hope their bank balances made it worth the effort.

Director Juan Piquer Simon, after lately dabbling with cheap Jules Verne adaptations, shamelessly rips off one of Spain's better genre efforts, Narciso Ibanez Serrador's *The House that Screamed*, as well as all the recent American slasher product.

"You don't have to go to Texas for a chainsaw massacre" proclaim the effective posters for Pieces. No, I suppose you don't – but it would help!

TESTAMENT

"Accomplishes much without hammering home the points."

A Starburst Film Review
by Alan Jones

Testament is the flip side of the much hyped – and subsequently anti-climactic – tv movie *The Day After*. It is the film that should more deservedly have been brought to the nation's attention.

Made for the Public Broadcasting System's Amer-

ican Playhouse series, but being given a cinema release on both sides of the Atlantic, it couldn't be further from *The Day After*'s social soap-opera confection linked to a now fashionable theme.

Be warned – Testament really is the ultimate downer. It details with a chilling, sobering accuracy how a typical family copes after an unspecified nuclear attack has devastated most of America. There are no fancy special effects on show here – just a sudden, shocking interruption during *Sesame Street* followed by a blinding flash. And before you know it Jane Alexander (in an Oscar worthy performance) has to deal with things that she has always dreaded and ignored up till now. Like lining up for food rationing, mourning her missing husband, burying her children and coming to terms

with the stark reality that she too will eventually die of radiation sickness. But although she tries, she just can't commit suicide and that is her testament in the life-affirmation stakes.

Testament accomplishes so much without hammering home the points, becoming preachy or glamourising events. It is depressing viewing to be sure but in a deeply moving way. I doubt whether anyone can watch it without blinking back the tears during the more wrenching scenes that director Lynne Littman's sensitive camera makes us privy to.

But Testament's most shattering effect comes more with the realisation that this depiction of the future is closer today than it ever was before. And that is really why it must be seen and should almost be made required viewing.



Left: A mother and her children take cover from a nuclear attack. Above: The devastation of most of America doesn't stop this young lad from raiding the larder.

YOR, THE HUNTER FROM THE FUTURE

"Absolute hell to sit through."

A Starburst Film Review
by Alan Jones

They really don't come any worse, dull or boring than Yor.

Whatever credibility director Antonio Margheriti had before has been dashed with this inept, cheesy muscleman epic that thinks mixing *Conan* with *Star Wars* is a stunningly original idea. An Italian/Turkish co-production (which says it all really!), the only line of inane dialogue you don't hear throughout the seemingly endless 88-minute running time is "Yor place or mine".

See Yor battle cardboard dinosaurs so poverty row it makes you yearn for *At the Earth's Core!*

See Yor single-handedly massacre *Quest for Fire* rejects without once losing his blond Heavy Metal wig!

See Yor vanquish Overlord and his Darth Vader helmeted robot hordes!

See Yor do all this accompanied by the hilariously

tacky disco theme song!

Don't see Yor at all. It may sound delightfully bad but as is usually the case, it isn't. It's just plain bad, and absolute hell to sit through to boot.

NIGHTMARES

"An uneven hit and miss anthology."

A Starburst Film Review
by Alan Jones

Originally intended as a pilot telefilm for NBC, *Nightmares* is an uneven hit and miss anthology more in the Amicus tradition than *The Twilight Zone* – the obvious reason for its diversion to the cinema.

"Terror in Topanga," headlines Cristina Raines who, desperate for a packet of cigarettes, puts herself at incredible risk when she drives to the local store when there is a known knife-wielding maniac on the loose in the area. Reasonably taut, this segment actually pulls off its surprise twist with aplomb and makes for an effective and scary opener.

The best tale comes next. "The Bishop of Battle" is

a video game that has arcade champ Emilio Estevez hooked. Nobody has ever reached level 13 on the machine and when he actually does, it turns out to be a lot more than he bargained for. Obviously *Tron* inspired, this section is neat and well paced sporting excellent, if limited, animation effects.

It's downhill fast with "The Benediction" concerning a priest who has lost his faith and how it is reaffirmed when he does battle with a satanically possessed pick-up truck. *The Car*, and of course *Duel*, did all this before and a lot better but this episode does have one genuinely startling moment when the demonic van bursts out of the ground up from the depths of Hades.

"Night of the Rat" is the last story and it brings *Nightmares* to a depressingly bad close. Veronica Cartwright and family fight a giant rat that has inexplicably come to rest in their woodwork. Totally ridiculous and uninspiring, this is where the film betrays its 2 million dollar budget by using a live rat processed into the action very badly. Next to this segment *Food of the Gods* is a masterpiece!

Joseph Sargent directs all the episodes in a steady workmanlike manner complete with the expected framing for television. But *Nightmares* is only an adequate entry in the territory that Dan Curtis used to excel in and should certainly have never made it to the big screen.

As a follow-up to Alan Jones' interview with German director Ulli Lommel in *Starburst 61*, let's look at his genre titles on video. Lommel's most famous film is probably *The Boye Man* (leaving aside his art-film study of a real-life vampire for the Fassbinder stable *Tenderness of Wolves*) in which his imagination is satisfactorily given full play. The supernatural progressions of the plot (involving some eldritch shards of glass) is studied with cleverly-devised "novelty murders"—but these, regrettably, drew the wrath of the censors, and despite having been available for quite some time, most copies are now withdrawn. It's the usual arbitrary selection by the censors, however, as far more graphic fare is available (although, no doubt, our guardians will decimate that too).

DULLSVILLE TERROR

After this, *The Devonville Terror* (VTC) is a disappointment, little of Lommel's flair being apparent in a tale of reincarnated witch's revenge. Here, Suzanna Love (Frau Lommel) displays her talents to the delectations of male viewers, but Donald Pleasence sleepwalks his part, and mayhem is conventional — the exploding and melting heads at the finale not really matching *Scanners* or *Raiders*.

BIGGER BUDGET

Things look up with *Brain Waves* (UTC), Lommel's largest budgeted film to date (featuring name stars such as Tony Curtis, Keir Dullea and Vera Miles). Curtis is there for marquee value only, but Dullea does well as the husband of a woman (Ms. Love again) brain-damaged in a car accident, who receives an electronic treatment which implants the memories of a murdered girl. The suspense sequences are stylishly done (the aforementioned accident, a murder in which a radio is dropped into a bath) and performances are well up to par.

Finally, though, it remains a conventional effort with current video releases of Lommel's quirky flair evident.

HITCH HOMAGE

Double Jeopardy (Vipco) borrows from Hitchcock's *Marnie* the source of its heroine's psychosis; here we have a steamy mixture of sexual grappling and murder, with (you'll be absolutely astonished to hear) Suzanne Love at the centre of it all. But even in a flawed Hitchcock like *Marnie*, the old master still leaves Lommel's homage looking warmed-over fare indeed.

SON OF...

This is also true of the latest Lommel on video, *Goblin: Revenge of the Boye-man* (VTC) which is, of course, *Boye-man II*. The first half of the film shamelessly re-uses footage from the

Video FILE

Tape Reviews by
Barry Forshaw



Above: Patricia Neal emerges from an alien flying saucer, closely followed by Michael Rennie as Klaatu, while the giant robotic figure of Gort stands guard in *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (20th Century Fox video). Below: Two scenes from current video releases, *The Birds* (left) and *The Swarm* (right).

WOULD WE LIE TO YOU?



HITS

1. *Eyes Without a Face* (Intervision)
2. *The Birds* (C.I.C.)
3. *Asylum* (Guild)
4. *THX 1138* (Warner)
5. *Day the Earth Stood Still* (20th)

PITS

1. *Whodunnit?* (E.I.V.)
2. *The Swarm* (Warner)
3. *Poor White Trash* (Iver)
4. *Blood of the She Devils* (V.C.L.)
5. *Corpse Grinders* (V.C.L.)

earlier film (related by — guess who — Suzanna Love, in flashback) with the "mirror spirit" commandeering a new host for dispatching a group of fringe Hollywood movie-makers. The murders lack the élan of part I, and the autobiographical element of the film goes for little (Lommel himself plays an art film director who moves into horror as a more commercially viable commodity) — we still await a film that fulfils that early promise.

HELL-ISH HUMOUR

No reservations, though, about *Motel Hell* (Warner), Kevin Connor's delicious black comic shocker, in which the tongue-in-cheek elements of *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* are heightened outrageously. This, however, doesn't stop the grisly tale from operating satisfactorily on a suspense level (a final chainsaw battle being gripping stuff, for instance).

Actually, the film's antecedents reach back beyond *T.C.S.M.* The plot — a deranged farmer (Rory Calhoun) cultivating a "garden" of victims whose vocal chords have been slashed — is right out of the classic Feldstein/Gaines E.C. comics of the 50's — as is the revenge of the buried-alive "plants" at the finale. If you talk to anyone about the film, don't let them tell you Calhoun's final line — it's worth the price of your video rental!

2D MOVIE

When *Intervision* issued a video of *Maniac* with almost all of Tom Savini's spectacular make-up efforts removed, one could safely say that any reason for renting was virtually non-existent. Now — does this apply to Charles Band's *Parasite* (Entertainment in Video) which, amazingly, has been issued without its much-trumpeted 3D? The answer, I'm afraid, has to be yes — despite the occasional gory special effect by Stan Winston & Co (such as the rather cute parasite bursting from the shrivelled face of a host/victim).

Band's approach is very much in the futures 3-D mode, ie the objects hurled at the viewer, hands groping, steel pipe in a thug's stomach jutting at one before dripping blood. And unlike, say Jack Arnold's *Creature From the Black Lagoon*, the 3-D staging is both wearisome and frustrating when shown flat (particularly as 3-D credits are clearly evident both at the beginning and end of the film!). It's a shame that Entertainment in Video's budget didn't run to 3-D prints and glasses (other non-first-rank companies have!) as only Winston's effects offer any reason for renting *Parasite* — particularly as Band has made the character nearest to a "hero" so utterly charmless that his fate matters to us as little as that of the two nominal villains (although this could be down to unfortunate casting, as in Cronenberg's *Scanners*).

NASCHY NASTY

Exorcism (VPD) wins hands down in the "worst rip-off of *The Exorcist*" stakes; Maria Perschy is listed as star on the box, but when the dreaded Paul Naschy's name appears on the film's credits, one's spirits drop – and, true to form, the film starts depressingly and progressively worsens in every respect – not the least of which is the night-visibility of the print in night scenes.

SQUIRM'S WORMS

The recent video issue of Jeff Lieberman's latest film, *Just Before Dawn*, has paved the way for the welcome re-issue by Rank of *Squirm*, the young director's most famous film. And watching it again, one is forcibly struck by how rare it is for a filmmaker to apply all of Hitchcock's precepts in the building of both suspense and character – even major talents such as Carpenter only really investigate the former.

Here, Lieberman cleverly establishes a wimpy intellectual hero, all clumsiness and city-bred superiority to the small-town milieu of the film. Against him is set the more virile (but slow-witted) villain, whose monstrous infestation by the blood worms that are the film's source of horror is the special effects highlight of Lieberman's film – the ravenous burrowings beneath his skin being particularly effective. And while the film, generally speaking, happily sacrifices plausibility (the speed and sound of the worms being particularly unlikely), the villain's surprising re-emergence from a seething mass of supposedly lethal worms has the justification of his "becoming one" with them – a further threat to the beleaguered hero and heroine.

Like Hitchcock's *The Birds*, there's a long, slow build-up to the final cataclysm, but it pays off handsomely. And for all its faults, Lieberman's movie is the best spin-off of the "ecological attack" films that Hitchcock instigated. Hopefully, we can now look forward to the acclaimed *Blue Sunshine* on video.

TAME BY COMPARISON

I can still remember the effect of seeing Jack Curtis' *The Flesh Eaters* (Knock-out Video Presentations) in a now-defunct Sixties flea-pit. One was aware that the goods were really being delivered, and it seemed the boundaries of graphic horror were being pushed as far as possible.

Now, in the post-Savini 80s, watching the badly-transferred grainy video (issued with a misleading colour cover – the film is black and white), one is all too aware of the woefully inadequate acting (Martin Kosleck, as the standard mad scientist creator of the eponymous flesh-eaters, seems to be the only professional in the cast, and he appears to be pining for the days when he played more complex monsters

such as Goebbels). The script is strictly second-drawer (handsome hero, witting heroine, assorted dispensable victims on a lonely island with a deranged scientist nurturing his glistening wa-

ter-borne carnivores) – and those grisly special effects, while still garnering the occasional frisson (the villain's demise – stripped of flesh by his creations, groping with a skeletal hand for

his gun, then blowing out his eye) have to contend with two things – the horror audience's current appetite for more finished effects, à la *Scanners*, and the appalling condition of the print from which this transfer was made – several sequences and much dialogue are fragmentary, to say the least. Still, a grisly curiosity.

DEADBEAT!

One of the many brilliant concepts created in *Forbidden Planet* was the ravaging "Monster From the Id" – the murderous psychic creation of an often unwilling "host". The idea has since been plundered many times (most recently in *Seizure*) but its least impressive outing can be found in Fabrice-Ange Zaphiratos' *Bloodbeast* (Replay) in the form of a phantom Samurai. Inadequate acting and plodding direction scuttle this opus.

NOT SO BAD . . .

You could have one of two reactions to *Evilspeak* (Videospace). The positive one would be: here's a neat, lively occult thriller with some impressively grisly effects (excepting the pre-credits beheading) and a well-observed performance by plump Clint Howard as Coopersmith, the eternal loser who finally turns on his persecutors. Reaction two would be: here's another *Omen* rip-off, principally borrowing the Military Academy setting of *D-mien*: *Omen*-Two as well as the Aur Sally girls-for-cutting-down. But let's be positive and choose option one.

BRIEF NOTES

The nadir of re-titling is surely *The Extra-Terrestrial Nastie* (World Video – and don't blame me for their spelling of "Nasty"!) where an elderly-looking John Agar stumbles through a creaking museum-piece boasting such deathless 60sisms as "the more people, the crazier the blast!"

Another deadly Donald Dohler film has staggered into the video shops called *The Alien Factor* (A.I. Video); as usual with Mr Dohler, his ambitions far exceed his resources – here various ludicrous aliens waddle after the worst actors outside Edward Wood Jr. There's even some clod-hopping stop-motion animation that would give Ray Harryhausen neuraesthesia.

Cries In the Night (Cream) has some good auguries in the credits – couple of good names in the cast, Jerry Fielding score and direction by the interesting William Fruet (look out for his *Trapped*). But no – it's just *Psycho* – clone No 2.567. Invention or inspiration not to be found.



Top: The Birds attack in Alfred Hitchcock's famous thriller (now available on C.I.C. Video). Above: An horrific scene from Jeff Lieberman's *Squirm* (Rank Video). Below: The publicity artwork for another Lieberman film, hopefully soon to be released on video.

Elanby Films presents **A SHOCKER**
a film by Jeff Lieberman starring Zalman King/Deborah Winters
Mark Goddard/Robert Walker/Charles Seibert/Ann Cooper/Ray Young
Guest Stars Alice Ghostley and Stefan Gierisch Produced by George Manasse
Executive Producers Edgar Lansbury & Joseph Beruh

TV ZONE

by Richard Holliss

Having recently received a tape of assorted TV themes from *Starburst* reader Jim McDade (thanks, Jim), I found when listening to the various tracks that I could still remember a majority of the credit sequences that accompanied them. Now that Channel 4 are rescreening old shows and there is the occasional appearance of a classic programme on the BBC, it's not as difficult as it used to be, and it's interesting that a lot of fantasy programmes were fortunate enough to have some of the most

ingenious and cleverly edited of opening credits.

The most famous has to be *The Prisoner*, each week featuring a condensed version of the plot premise. *The Avengers* brought back fond memories although the end titles for the Linda Thorson series in America, sacrificed the deck of cards for a James Bond style sequence. The black and white Diana Rigg series was made up of still photographs, Steed patting his bowler into place and Emma pulling on her "kinky" boots.

Randall and Hopkirk Deceased however, settled for a well-edited intro, showing how Kenneth Cope is killed in an accident but appears at his own funeral in a ghostly white suit. Beckoning his rather surprised partner (Mike Pratt) over for a chat, he explains his predicament and offers his supernatural help in fighting crime. *The Green Hornet*'s credits were animated with an enormous 'hornet' hovering in front of a pulsating light. Very strange, especially when accompanied by the rather bizarre soundtrack. *Batman*, starring Adam West as the Caped Crusader, was also animated,

with the dynamic duo chasing a collection of evil doers. The addition of the Batsign and the Batmobile helped to make this an interesting prologue to a somewhat camp series.

Irwin Allen's *Land of the Giants* also begins with an animated introduction showing a man running from a searchlight only to be picked up by a huge hand as the figure poses beside giant letters announcing the show's title. As impressive a scene as the poster art for *Ben Hur*. The series, however, could have been a lot better. *The Time Tunnel* featured another animated man this time stuck in an egg-timer. Both these shows also made use of photographs of the cast. This technique, now a part of nearly every American series, was used on the 3rd Season of *Lost In Space*, although the first series contained animated characters floating in space, then slightly modified for the 2nd season. (Neil Norman and his Cosmic Orchestra, have brought out a third album of SF themes which features the title music to *Lost In Space*, versions 1 and 2).



Top: The space family Robinson from *Lost in Space*. Top right: Spock with his parents in a scene from *Star Trek*. Right: The China Syndrome with Jane Fonda and Michael Douglas. Above: Adam West and Burt Ward as the caped crusaders, Batman and Robin.

We all know *The Outer Limits* and *The Twilight Zone* credits off by heart, but who can still remember *Night Gallery* with its flickering image of distorted faces grimacing at the camera and the end title card that resembled something out of an M.C. Escher painting? *My Favourite Martian* (like *Bewitched*) used animated credits to great effect. We see a little character with antenna climb aboard a glass bubble spaceship, take off from the surface of Mars and zoom through space to land on the Earth. Samantha may have used a broomstick, but whatever the method, both shows were enormously successful with *My Favourite Martian* lasting for 107 episodes and *Bewitched*, 252.

Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea went through a number of credit changes during its four season run. Although the opening sequence remained more or less the same, the addition of various pieces of hardware in the series meant that while the black and white series finished with a shot of the sub surfacing at the North Pole, the colour shows ended with firstly, a rather nicely painted picture of the Seaview speeding through the water and secondly, a freeze-frame of the flying sub diving towards the ocean. *Star Trek* remained the same, except the 2nd and 3rd seasons included De Forest Kelley's name in the opening credits.

The puppet series *Space Patrol*, created by Roberta Leigh and Arthur Provis, a one-time partner of Gerry Anderson, began with a shot of the sun, then switched to a view of the Earth in space. Suddenly a strange spacecraft called a galasphere whirled past. As it recedes the opening credits fill the screen. Next we see Space City on Earth, a sophisticated landscape of skyscrapers and odd shaped buildings joined by a network of clear tubes in which small transport craft speed to different destinations. At ground level, spheres resembling marbles roll from left to right. Although looking rather crude by today's standards, the visuals are greatly enhanced by a weird electronic soundtrack.

The Invaders series starts with an alien spacecraft travelling through space toward Earth. From his car the hero Roy Thinnes, witnesses the landing and this immediately puts him in jeopardy. This cut down version of the main plot helped to establish each week's story and the series worked as a minor appreciation of *The Fugitive*.

To round off this month, a look at Christmas television. There wasn't much to get excited about after ITV put us all in the mood early in December with *The Day After*. It did contain some stunning images – a landscape of mushrooming atomic clouds and at least it wasn't quite the *Dallas* meets *the Atom bomb* scenario that we all feared. Filmmike the Harryhausen season re-emerged, cut as usual. Jacques Tati appeared in *Mr Hulot's Holiday* and the rather overlong *Playtime*. There was a Marx Brothers season and a Cary Grant season, although the TV screenings of *The China Syndrome*, *Coma* and *Carrie* were well worth the wait. James Bond was back with a vengeance over the festive period, although ITV trimmed up little sections of the stories. It was certainly enjoyable watching *At Last the 1948 Show* on Channel 4, even if *George and the Dragon* had lost its fire and enthusiasm and *Val Parnell's Sunday Night at the London Palladium* displayed beneath the excruciatingly bad stage presence of Messrs Forsyth and Wisdom. Highlights were the repeat showing of Raymond Briggs *The Snowman*, the two part Frank Muir programme on the *Best of BBC Comedy Shows* and as far as Radio is concerned, *A Birthday at Bethlehem* on Christmas Day.

Book World

by Chris Charles



Being a book reviewer for a film and television magazine is a bit like being a cuckoo in the nest. I often wonder how many of you out there read my bit. As I see it, the aim of my column is to try to provide guidelines on what books are worth looking out for and which ones should be avoided, but that begs the question of whether *Starburst* readers have much time or inclination for reading novels and the like. Does the cinema-going public overlap with the book-buying one, or are they mostly distinct? Am I providing a useful service or just whistling in the dark? These are rhetorical questions – I don't want all of you to write in and tell me to get lost.

For once, anyway, I can confidently recommend a book that I'm sure will be of interest to *Starburst* readers – *The Hamlyn Book of Horror and SF Lists* by Roy Pickard (Hamlyn, £1.95). I'll leave it to others more knowledgeable on the cinema than me to pass judgement on whether this book is actually a useful and original piece of film scholarship; I'll simply say that as a layman I found it entertaining enough as these kind of compilations go. Books of lists seem to be proliferating these days, and this one contains everything from the most popular science fiction and horror movies of all time to a complete list of all the 78 *Star Trek* TV episodes (funny that – it's supposed to be a book of movie lists, but never mind). Did you know that Bela Lugosi began his career by playing Dr Jekyll's butler in a German film? That a scene showing *E.T.* splashing about in the bath was cut from the final movie? That Steve McQueen's first starring role was in *The Blob*? You did?

My only real complaint with this book is the author's irritating habit of calling science fiction "sci-fi". This is a term which makes fans of the written stuff cringe; it smacks of outdated trendiness, like calling something "fab", and if I was Prime Minister I'd have it banned overnight by decree. Mr Pickard, who seems otherwise interested in and knowledgeable about written SF, should have known better.

Habitation One by Frederick Dunstan (Fontana, £1.75) is remarkable in that it was written by the author at the tender age of 17. I approached it with some caution, being leery (not to mention jealous) of prodigies, but in fact it turns out to be a very accomplished first novel for one so young. It's a story in the classic "closed environment" SF mould, the *Habitation One* of the title being a settlement built on a lofty cylinder which rises far above the surface of an Earth devastated by a nuclear war. The plot is the familiar one about various inhabitants

gradually discovering how and why their particular world came into being, but the author creditably avoids the pat ending of having them escape from the place and recolonize the Earth. In fact he's pretty good at avoiding clichés altogether, and though the writing inevitably suffers from immaturity at times, it also contains some excellent passages. But while I admired the overall proficiency of the novel, I was left feeling very uneasy by the author's preoccupation with mutilation and torture; several of his characters are subjected to nasty experiences which leave them disfigured or dead, and these are dwelt on at rather too much length for my liking.

Helliconia Summer (Cape, £8.50) is the second novel in Brian Aldiss's trilogy about a planet in a long orbit about two suns which is subject to great seasonal changes in its surface temperature as a result. It strikes me as a better novel than its predecessor, mainly because its drama is reduced to a more compact and individual level than in *Helliconia Spring*. Here we follow the various intrigues surrounding a King who is forced to divorce his queen for political reasons. In the course of the story Aldiss's cast travel around most of Helliconia, thus allowing the author to depict with considerable effect the amazing fertility of a planet in the throes of a brief summer which will eventually give way to centuries of intense cold. For the moment the humans are dominant on Helliconia, but their alien counterparts, the phagors, await the return of the cold and their own resurgence. Meanwhile the Earth observation station orbiting the planet records the unfolding drama and beams pictures back to Earth for edification and entertainment of everyone – a clever device by which Aldiss turns his story into a futuristic equivalent of a prime-time TV soap opera on the grandest of scales.

The whole trilogy is certainly an ambitious undertaking, and I look forward to the final book with more optimism than I did after reading *Helliconia Spring*. Yet the worrying feeling lingers that when all is said and done the trilogy will prove to be a mature and elegant space opera, but no more than that. Meanwhile nagging loose-ends remain, not the least of which is the apparent ability of the monitoring equipment on board the observation satellite to see and hear through stone walls over hundreds of miles. Assuming that I haven't missed some earlier explanation of how this is possible, I think we should be told.

Gollancz's annual compilation of SF shorts is now out at £9.95. *The Best Science Fiction of the Year 12* is edited by Terry Carr, and should become accurately entitled *The Best Science Fiction Published in North America 12*, since all the material was selected from US publications. Still, this is a varied and entertaining collection overall, with particularly good stories from Bruce Sterling ("Swarm", about a very strange alien species) and Connie Willis ("Firewatch", a moving time-travel story set in London during the Blitz). Also represented are such writers as Robert Silverberg, Frederick Pohl, Ursula LeGuin and Thomas M. Disch.

Black Water by Alberto Manguel (Picador, £4.95) is subtitled "The Anthology of Fantastic Literature" and is a bumper compilation of stories running to almost 1000 pages. It comprises material chosen more from "classic" writers rather than genre ones and has a good international flavour. Borges, Kafka, Wells, Verne, Poe, Nabokov, Wilde, Dickens, Kipling and many others are on display here, with Ursula LeGuin and Ray Bradbury joining the impressive cast-list. This is the kind of collection to dip into over a long period of time, and it's excellent value for money.

It's Only A MOVIE

A Film Column by John Brosnan

It's a shame about *Brainstorm*. After all of Douglas Trumbull's troubles in getting the film completed and released one hoped it would be a success. Unfortunately it isn't; instead it proves that Trumbull hasn't progressed as a director in the ten years since *Silent Running*. It's a very confused and disjointed movie and though part of the reason could be the radical trimming it underwent before release it remains obvious that as a piece of film making it's just plain clumsy.

There are some good ideas floating around in *Brainstorm* but neither Trumbull or his writers know exactly what to do with them. They go in one direction for a time and then change their minds and go off in another and the result is you end up wondering just what sort of movie they thought they were making. The central idea—that of a device that can record a person's physical and emotional sensations and play them back in the mind of someone else—is an interesting one. It's also a very old one; it's been around in science fiction literature for zillions of years though Trumbull gives the impression he thinks it's a break-through concept.

Even so if he'd stuck to making an sf thriller about the positive and negative aspects of such a device he might have had a good film but no, Trumbull had to get all pretentious and metaphysical, just as he did with *Silent Running*, and tries to turn *Brainstorm* into something Significant. Yes folks, *Brainstorm* addresses the Big Questions: like, what happens when you die? Is there a heaven and a hell? What is the Secret of the Universes? And not only that, the film attempts to answer them...

Now as much as I admire Trumbull's prowess as

almost as banal as the one in *The Black Hole*—Hell resembles a room party at a science fiction convention while Heaven, or God, is represented by a glowing white light surrounded by lots of flapping pillow cases (the message here seems to be that if you're fairly confident of making it to Heaven you would be well-advised to pack a pair of sunglasses before making your departure).

I'm not sure what conclusion the audience was supposed to draw from these sequences. The protagonist, played (badly) by Christopher Walken appears to find death a positive experience and is unwilling to respond to his wife's pleas to return but finally his love for her triumphs over the Ultimate Experience and he returns to his body. Is he downhearted at still being alive? No, on the contrary, he's very excited and starts babbling on about the stars and the Wright Brothers (the sequence is staged in front of an exhibition commemorating the Wright Brothers' first flight). The message got here was that there was some connection between the Death Experience and aeroplanes. Or was Trumbull trying to say that dying was a technological breakthrough that would one day enable Man to reach the stars? One suicide pill and—bingo!—you're an astronaut. (I think I'd prefer more conventional means of space travel.)

One wonders what God, or whatever the white light was supposed to represent, thought of Walken's brief encounter. "Look, this Nirvana is really 'triff but the little missus is expecting me home. See you next time." "Oh no you won't," mutters the Ultimate Being. "Next time it's the sf convention room party for you, mate."

The film's biggest handicap is that it's all about the transference of emotions whereas, of course, film can deal in *images* only. So all those subjective shots of roller coaster rides, etc. remain nothing but familiar movie images rather than emotional experiences and you end up with the impression that this miracle thought-device is just a new kind of movie camera. An insurmountable problem, of course, but Trumbull should have taken it into account very early on in the development of the project.

I do admire Trumbull's willingness to tackle a

Okay, it's Awards time! That time of the year when the column salutes the genre hits, and misses, of the previous year. And 1983 certainly was a year for genre movies...

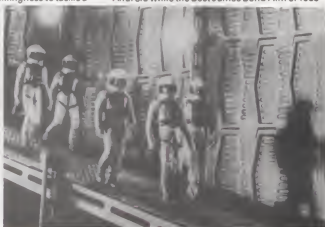
I'll open the first envelope... and it's the *Golden Yoda Award* for Best *Star Wars* Movie of 1983 and... gosh, this is embarrassing folks, it's a "No Award" situation. Apparently the judges felt that *Return of the Jedi* didn't qualify (I hope George doesn't hear about this!)... Well, on to the next envelope... and it's the *Mary Whitehouse Award* for Most Impressive Make-Up Effects... nominated are *The Evil Dead*, *Monty Python's Meaning of Life* and *Videodrome*... a close race but *Videodrome* is the winner! Congratulations Rick Baker! You get this bronzed statuette of Mary Whitehouse throwing up into a sick bag...

Next we have the *Exploding Turkey Award* for worst Australian movie. No contest here. It goes straight to *Turkey Shoot*, the film that gaveturkeys a bad name... and now the *Sleeping Critic Award* for most Boring Fantasy Movie... nominated are *Something Wicked This Way Comes* and *Krull*... and yes, *Something Wicked* wins by several snores...



Next it's the Award for Best Comedy Starring Christopher Reeve... and it's a tie between *Superman 3* and *Monsignor*. Congrats, Chris. On to the next envelope... and it's the *Golden Godzilla Award* for Best Animal Horror Movie... nominated are *Jaws II*, *Cujo* and *Q—the Winged Serpent*... and *Q* wins by a talon.

The Best SF Film Award goes deservedly to *Android* while the Best James Bond Film of 1983



Top right: *Mr Dark* (Jonathan Pryce) would like to get his hands round John Brosnan's throat for awarding *Something Wicked This Way Comes* the Sleeping Critic Award for the Most Boring Fantasy Movie. Above left: A scene from *Brainstorm* starring Christopher Walken. Above right: 2001: A Space Odyssey (1969) featured Douglas Trumbull's special effects.

an effects technician he is not the first man I'd go to for advice on life after death or even the Secret of the Universe. On the evidence of the intellectual content, or lack of it, in *Silent Running* alone one would be justified in presuming that Trumbull's interpretation of the Ultimate Mysteries might be a little on the banal side. A viewing of *Brainstorm* irrefutably confirms this suspicion. The ending is

science fiction subject that was potentially intellectually heavier than most sf films around these days but, to put it bluntly, he's just not up to the job. His involvement with 2001 all those years ago seems to have given him the idea that he can become another Stanley Kubrick. Alas, he's picked the wrong role model; he's aimed too high. He'd be better off trying to be another George Lucas...

Award goes to *Never Say Never Again*. The Worst James Bond Film of 1983 Award goes, of course, to you know what.

Finally a special Award for Original Paperback Novel Most Likely to Make a Really Terrific Movie... it goes to a marvellous book called *The Midas*... (Editor: Time's up Brosnan, kindly leave the stage.)

AUDIO DROME

Record Reviews
by Mat Irvine

Just when you think there are no more records to listen to – another selection turns up!

The soundtrack to *Twilight Zone – The Movie* boasts a score by the talented Jerry Goldsmith. Perhaps *The Movie* didn't capture the essence of the TV series. However the old theme, written by Marius Constant is effectively recreated, and Goldsmith comes up with an appropriate Overture that matches the mood of the stories. The record is concise, with a track devoted to the version of the music written for each segment, and they are presented in order too, which is unusual! The Overture's new T.Z. theme is cleverly woven into each piece, but otherwise each has a completely different feel. John Landis's Time Out segment is suitably edgy and jump as Vic Morrow's Bill character is snapped from one scenario to the next. Similarly the third segment, directed by Joe Dante, it's a Good Life, recreates a "Loony Tunes" cartoon house populated by exploding television sets and monstrous rabbits. The fourth segment, George Millers' Nightmare at 20,000 feet, is nervously claustrophobic, while the second segment Kick the Can, the one directed by Steven Spielberg comes over as a complete antithesis, with most of the score in waltz time. As a bonus you also get the Jennifer Warnes vocal, "Nights are Forever", and a fairly informative record sleeve. Overall a worthwhile soundtrack album.

It's interesting to realise that both Goldsmith and John Williams did music for the original *Twilight Zone* TV series, along with many other composers. Williams though, having completed the *Star Wars* trilogy, seems to have dropped out of the *Superman* films and the score of the scores is now 1½ each to Williams and Ken Thorne. Actually, it isn't even as simple as that as the music for *Superman III* is a combined effort between Thorne providing the music for the purely instrumental tracks, based on Williams' original themes (one of which was borrowed from Richard Strauss), while Giorgio Moroder enters the saga by producing all the songs for the film, which fill Side Two of the *Superman III* soundtrack album.

This seems to be a time for cover versions, for another recording, more recent this time, comes from l'Orchestre Electronique and their *Sound Waves*. They are basically straightforward interpretations of standard instrumentals, most with an SF connection, although the only French connection the group's name indicates is that they do quite a few Jean-Michel Jarre tracks. One track is from *Oxygene*, one from *Equinoxe* and one from my favourite of his, *Magnetic Fields*. To these you can add Vangelis standards as "To the Unknown Man" (from *Spiral*), the section from *Heaven and Hell* which is now better known as the theme from *Cosmos*, (which seagoes into *Chariots of Fire*); *Blade Runner*, which is not available by Vangelis anyway and "Pulstar", from *Albedo 0.39*. I have to admit thinking that this recording had listed the

last track incorrectly as I had always imagined that it should be Pulsar. But a check back to *Albedo 0.39* seems that Pulstar is correct. Also from Mr Papathanassiou is "Chung Kuo" (The Long March), originally from the *China* album, and which a certain TV advertisement seems to have borrowed, in spirit at least. Probably the most intriguing Vangelis-written track on this album isn't one of the appropriately *Starburst* tracks, but it's the most interesting: the theme to *Missing*. Like *Blade Runner*, Vangelis did not want a soundtrack album issued, but unlike *Blade Runner*, there wasn't a cover version, so this is – as far as I know – the only recording of it that has been released.

Returning to more fantasy-oriented themes, *Sound Waves* is completed by the *CE3K* and *Star Wars* themes, and a Johnny Keating original, "Prelude to Earthrise", which I believe – and I cannot check as it's one of the few albums of his I don't have. Rounding off the ensemble you have two oddish inclusions as they come from Herbie Flowers who, when he isn't writing music and being one of the country's foremost session bass players, is 15th of Sky. These are two Sky originals, "Westway" – a celebration of the A40(M) – and the famous "Carillon". I'm usually not too keen on cover versions though these are done extremely well, and on first listening I suspect you won't be able to tell them from the originals.

Jean-Michel Jarre came second to Vangelis with music on that album, but he's recently released a compilation of his own anyway, *The Essential Jean-Michel Jarre*. Contents are taken from his previous albums – amazingly he's only released three original albums – *Oxygene*, *Equinoxe* and *Jes chants magnetique*, plus *The Concerts in China* as a live recording. Interestingly though this new record lists all the recordings and adds the private pressing of *Music for Supermarkets*, which sounds like something Brian Eno would have done... Musically this compilation features all the famous Jarre tracks – "Oxygene 4", "Equinox 5" and "Magnetic Fields 5 – The Last Rumba". Add to this a sprinkling of other numbers and it adds up to an interesting compilation. If you haven't got any J.M.J., this makes an excellent start, and if you have, it's a good way to play all the best bits and not have to keep changing the records.

The LSO never seem to be far away from these ramblings; I've already mentioned them once, and they turn up again on a Music for Pleasure album. It was rumoured that once John Williams had completed the three *Star Wars* scores, he would re-work the themes into a Symphonic Suite. This record is titled (surprise!) *John Williams' Symphonic Suites*, but it is actually new versions of the established film scores. Besides *Star Wars*, the LSO and the National Philharmonic Orchestra, play excerpts from *ET* and *Close Encounters*, both of which were initially performed by session studio orchestras for the films. *Star Wars* was one of the scores that the LSO did record for the film, but on this album it's played by the National Philharmonic. They also perform the *CE3K* section, which leaves the LSO with *ET*.

The music order is somewhat of a mixture. It starts with *ET*, goes into *Star Wars*, goes back to *ET*, then back to *Star Wars*, drops in on *Close Encounters* and then, yes you've guessed, back to *ET*.

Overall *Star Wars*, even played by the wrong Orchestra, comes out best, or rather, sounds the most like the original. Unfortunately both the *ET* and *CE3K* sections sound somewhat subdued compared to the originals, which is a pity as I had always maintained that they should have been soundtracked by a Symphony orchestra. Two sections are not original, an electronic "Star Ship Attack" is incorporated in the *Star Wars* music, which it doesn't need, and the *Close Encounters* track begins with non-Williams piece "The Experience Begins", which although reasonably pleasant doesn't add anything to this, one of Williams' best scores. An odd recording but useful if you don't have the soundtracks and want "the best of..."

And onto the last record this month, and a more recent film – the thinking man's *Tron* – *War Games*. It is scored by a relative newcomer to films, Arthur B. Rubinstein, though not a newcomer to composing. He has worked on a number of TV movies and theatre productions and he had just finished *Blue Thunder*. The album is a mixture of orchestral and synthesized sounds interspersed with dialogue from the film, rather like the *Flash Gordon* soundtrack. Even the vocal tracks that Rubinstein had written for the film but which were not used, have been included here. It makes up into a potted version of the film... but not enough to tell you what's happening if you haven't seen it. Throughout the score, the military side is represented by the orchestra, in suitable snare-drum style, while the more human elements have a softer approach. An interesting album. ■



Starburst DATA BANK

Information from the filing
cabinet of Dr Sally Garry

Greetings, **Starbursters!** It's good to be back after a brief break. This column is being typed just after the Christmas holidays, so I'll take this opportunity to wish you all a prosperous New Year. Now that's over with, to business.

MATHESON UPDATE

Omitted from the Richard Matheson filmography in the first edition of this column (**Starburst 63**) were the following: screenplay for *Master of the World* (1961), screenplay for *Tales of Terror* (1962), teleplay for the tv-movie *Dying Room Only* (1973), teleplay for *Scream of the Wolf* (1974), teleplay for *The Strange Possession of Mrs Oliver* (1977), and finally co-screenplay credit should have been noted for the recent *Jaws 3-D* (1983). There's bound to be a few credits still not accounted for ... let's have those additions/corrections or there'll be trouble. Y'heer?

ACTING DIRECTORS

Here's a real goody of a question from Jack Coulter in Yorkshire: "How many directors, other than Alfred Hitchcock of course, have made appearances in their own fantasy films?"

Like it, Jack! Here's all I could think of off the top of my head: Zelig could be thought of as the zombie beleaguered tv director in the opening reel of *Dawn of the Dead* (1979), Michael Powell as Carl Boehm's sadistic psychologist father in *Peeping Tom* (1969), Roman Polanski as a man playing the spoons in a pub in *Repulsion* (1965) and as the assistant vampire hunter, Alfred, in *Dance of the Vampires* (1967) and as the title star of *The Tenant* (1976), John Landis as the Missing Link in *Schlock* (1972) and as a bystander who is hurled through a Piccadilly Circus bank window in *An American Werewolf in London* (1981), Peter Bogdanovich as a drunken director in *Targets* (1967), John Milius as a Street Vendor who tries to sell Conan a lizard on a stick in *Conan* (1982), Ray Milland as the star of *Panic in the Year Zero* (1962, see feature on page 18), John Carpenter as the church janitor in *The Fog* (1980), Art Nelson as the sheriff in *The Creeping Terror* (1964), David Cronenberg as a customer at the shopping mall check-point in *Rabid* (1977), Clint Eastwood as the unnamed hero of *High Plains Drifter* (1972), and as the star of *Play Misty for Me* (1971),

Paul Bartel as Frankenstein's Doctor in *Deathrace 2000* (1975), John Sayles in *The Brother from Another Planet* (1984), Sam Raimi as a hitch hiker in *The Evil Dead* (1982); Abel Ferrara in the title role of *Driller Killer* (1980), Mel Brooks in the lead role of *High Anxiety* (1981), Ulli Lommel as "The Director" in *Boogeyman 2*, plus Ray Dennis Steckler and Lucio Fulci who appear in all their own movies. And who could ever forget Edward D. Wood in his unforgettable appearance as the transvestite star of that tremendous movie *Glen or Glenda?* (1952, aka, *I Changed My Sex*).

HAT TRICK

Two questions from Christopher Allan of Oxshott in Surrey. (Two? Pushing your luck, Chris!) The first is "Where can I find the book 'Creepshow' by Stephen King?"

You can't! King wrote the script of *Creepshow* especially for the film, though a couple of the segments were based on short stories previously published in magazines, notably "The Crate". Short of hunting up the magazines in question (can anyone out there help with an index to the magazine titles and issue numbers?) you're out of luck. But don't fret! There is always the comic strip adaptation of the movie by King and American cult comic strip artist Bernie Wrightson, available from your local specialist comic shop for about a fiver.

Second question: "Please could you list the names of all the special effects team on George Romero's *Dawn of the Dead* and tell me how many films Romero has produced?"

This one's tougher, Chris. I spend hours rooting around trying to find out the names of Tom Savini's assistants on *Dawn of the Dead*. What did I find? Zelig! Only the credit "Special makeup and effects by Tom Savini." Maybe he did all the work himself. As to the films Romero has produced, I take it you mean how many films had George Romero directed. (He's a director, Chris, not a producer.) That being the case, here's the list: *Night of the Living Dead* (1968, effects by Savini), *The Affair* (1969, aka *It's Always Vanille*), *Chris's Wife* (1971, aka *Season of the Witch*), *The Crazies* (1973, couldn't find a makeup credit for this), *Martin* (1977,



John Amptias as Martin (1977). Makeup effects from Tom Savini.

makeup effects by Savini), *Dawn of the Dead* (1979), *Knight Riders* (1981, no makeup effects credit but Savini had a small role in the film), *Creepshow* (1982, makeup effects by Savini).

A QUESTION OF GENDER

All of which leads neatly to a rather strange query from Richard Durnford of Northampton, West Yorks, who asks "Is Wendy (aka, Walter) Carlos male or female?" But before I could go on to make a smart-alec reply, Richard continues, "This is a completely serious question. The soundtracks for *Tron* and *The Shining* are credited to 'Wendy Carlos', which sounds simple enough - a female composer. The Soundtrack to *A Clockwork Orange* is credited to 'Walter Carlos', who, as the album footnote makes clear, is a male composer. Now, I immediately presumed these are separate individuals, perhaps related in some way. But on numerous occasions I have read that it is the same composer for all the aforementioned soundtracks.

"Is this a multiple mistake made by several writers, or has the composer in question undergone a change of name for some reason?"

The simpler answer to this is that the composer has changed names for some reason. It's that very reason that was in some dispute for several years before the truth came out. The original story, put about by one of the Hollywood film companies was that Wendy used the pseudonym of 'Walter' for *A Clockwork Orange* to get around the natural prejudice against women in the film business. (Prejudice? Against women? No!) Which would seem a reasonable enough story, right? But they say that truth is stranger than fiction and this instance is no exception. Wendy Carlos was born Walter Carlos on 13th November 1939 and lived the first 29 years of his life as a man. Then he took the decision to become a woman and began the required hormone treatments in 1968. In May 1969 Walter changed his name to Wendy and began to live as a woman. In late 1972 Wendy was admitted to the Benjamin Foundation under the care of founder Harry Benjamin and underwent the final operation to make the change of gender complete. And Walter has been Wendy ever since. All clear?

CORMAN CREDITS

The most appealing question of the month comes from Steve Clement of Luton. "What do I have to do to persuade you to list Roger Corman's fantasy film credits in your column?"

Easy, treat me to a quiet candlelit dinner for two! While you're booking the table, here's the filmography: *Monster from the Ocean Floor* (1954, producer), *The Day the World Ended* (1956, producer/director), *It Conquered*

the World (1956, producer/director), *Attack of the Crab Monsters* (1957, producer/director), *Not of This Earth* (1957, producer/director), *The Undead* (1957, producer/director), *Viking Women and the Sea Serpent* (1957, producer/director), *War of the Satellites* (1958, producer/director), *Teenage Caveman* (1958, producer/director), *Night of the Blood Beast* (1958, producer/director), *The Wasp Women* (1959 producer/director) *Bucket of Blood* (1959, producer/director), *Little Shop of Horrors* (1960, producer/director), *The Last Woman on Earth* (1961, producer/director), *Creature from the Haunted Sea* (1961, producer/director) *Premature Burial* (1962, producer/director), *The Pit and the Pendulum* (1962, producer/director), *Tales of Terror* (1962, producer/director), *Tower of London* (1962, director), *Battle Beyond the Sun* (1963, executive producer), *Dementia 13* (1963, producer), *The Terror* (1963, producer/director), *The Raven* (1963, producer/director), *The Haunted Palace* (1963, producer/director), *The Man with the X-Ray Eyes* (1963 producer/director), *The Tomb of Ligeia* (1964, co-producer/director), *The Masque of the Red Death* (1964, producer/director), *Queen of Blood* (1966, executive producer), *Targets* (1967, executive producer), *The Dunwich Horror* (1970, producer), *Gass* (1970, producer/director), *Deathrace 2000* (1975, producer), *Deathsport* (1978, producer), *Piranha* (1979, executive producer), *Battle Beyond the Stars* (1980, executive producer), *Space Raiders* (1983, executive producer). Phew! Tell you what, Steve. Accept this *Battle Beyond the Stars* poster for the smooth way in which you phrased your question. And you don't have to buy me dinner if you don't want to!

FOR SAYLES

Michael Read of Cardiff wants to know the complete credits of script-writer John Sayles. Okay. As a script-writer: *Piranha* (1979), *Lady in Red* (1980), *The Howling* (1981), *Battle Beyond the Stars* (1981), *Alligator* (1982). As writer-director: *Return of the Secaucus Seven* (1980), *Lianna* (1983), *The Brother from Another Planet* (1984, incomplete at press time). As novelist: *Pride of the Barbos*, *Union Dues* and *The Anarchist Convention*. He also acted in a film called *Hard Choices* which he neither wrote nor directed. For more on the multi-talented John Sayles, watch out for Alan Jones interview, scheduled, our editor assures me, for publication in *Starburst* in the very near future.

That's all we have space for this ish. Keep those questions coming in or I'm out of a job. Send them to:

**Starburst Data Bank,
Marvel Comics Ltd,
23 Redan Place,
London W2 4SA.**



This page, a gaggle of scenes from John Sayles scripted movies. Above: Nanelia (Darlaine Fleugel) and the splendid St Exmin (Sybil Danning) get acquainted in *Battle Beyond the Stars* (1981). Left: The heroes of *Alligator* (1982) prowls the sewer system in search of the title star. Below left: A scene cut from the final version of *The Howling* (1981) . . . a werewolf encounter group. Below: One of the highlights of *The Howling* was Rob Bottin's marvellous werewolf make-up.



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